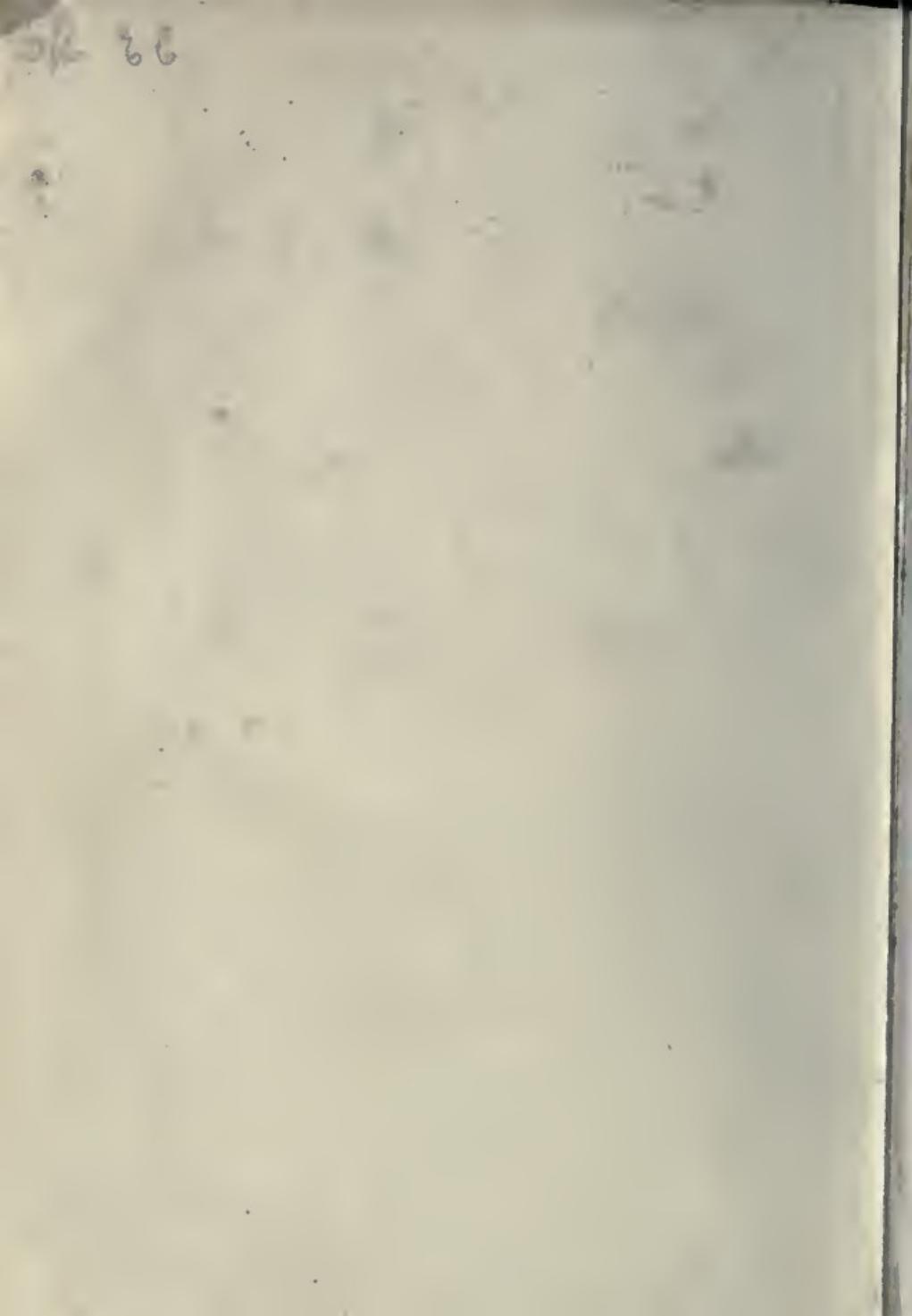




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*THE CAMEO POETS*

**INFERNO**

**DANTE**



On this side of the Tercinuous Gias. Once for sinners  
On this side and on Njal, good, above

Inferno, Canto V.

# The División of Dante Alighieri

TRANSLATED BY

REV. HENRY FRANCIS CARY MA.

## Inferno (Part I.)



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# THE VISION OF DANTE

## Inferno

### CANTO I

#### Argument.

The writer, having lost his way in a gloomy forest, and being hindered by certain wild beasts from ascending a mountain, is met by Virgil, who promises to show him the punishments of Hell, and afterwards of Purgatory; and that he shall then be conducted by Beatrice into Paradise. He follows the Roman poet.

IN the midway<sup>1</sup> of this our mortal life,  
I found me in a gloomy wood, astray  
Gone from the path direct; and e'en to tell,  
It were no easy task, how savage wild  
That forest, how robust and rough its growth,  
Which to remember only, my dismay  
Renews, in bitterness not far from death.

---

<sup>1</sup> *In the midway.*] That the era of the Poem is intended by these words to be fixed to the thirty-fifth year of the poet's age, A.D. 1300, will appear more plainly in Canto xxi., where that date is explicitly marked. In his *Convito*, human life is compared to an arch or bow, the highest point of which is, in those well framed by nature, at their thirty-fifth year. Opere di Dante, ediz. Ven. 8vo, 1793, t. i. p. 195.

Yet, to discourse of what there good befel,  
All else will I relate discover'd there.

How first I enter'd it I scarce can say,  
Such sleepy dulness in that instant weigh'd  
My senses down, when the true path I left ;  
But when a mountain's foot I reach'd, where  
closed

The valley that had pierced my heart with  
dread,

I look'd aloft, and saw his shoulders broad  
Already vested with that planet's beam,<sup>1</sup>  
Who leads all wanderers safe through every  
way.

Then was a little respite to the fear,  
That in my heart's recesses deep had lain  
All of that night, so pitifully past :  
And as a man, with difficult short breath,  
Forespent with toiling, 'scaped from sea to  
shore,

Turns to the perilous wide waste, and stands  
At gaze ; e'en so my spirit, that yet fail'd,  
Struggling with terror, turn'd to view the  
straits

That none hath past and lived. My weary  
frame

After short pause recomforted, again

---

<sup>1</sup> *That planet's beam.*] The sun.

I journey'd on over that lonely steep,  
 The hinder foot still firmer.<sup>1</sup> Scarce the ascent  
 Began, when, lo ! a panther,<sup>2</sup> nimble, light,  
 And cover'd with a speckled skin, appear'd ;  
 Nor, when it saw me, vanish'd ; rather strove  
 To check my onward going ; that oft-times,  
 With purpose to retrace my steps, I turn'd.

The hour was morning's prime, and on his  
 way

Aloft the sun ascended with those stars,<sup>3</sup>  
 That with him rose when Love divine first  
 moved

Those its fair works : so that with joyous hope  
 All things conspired to fill me, the gay skin  
 Of that swift animal, the matin dawn,  
 And the sweet season. Soon that joy was  
 chased,

And by new dread succeeded, when in view  
 A lion <sup>4</sup> came, 'gainst me as it appear'd,  
 With his head held aloft and hunger-mad,  
 That e'en the air was fear struck. A she-  
 wolf <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The hinder foot.*] It is to be remembered, that in ascending a hill the weight of the body rests on the hinder foot.

<sup>2</sup> *A panther.*] Pleasure or luxury.

<sup>3</sup> *With those stars.*] The sun was in Aries, in which sign he supposes it to have begun its course at the creation.

<sup>4</sup> *A lion.*] Pride or ambition. <sup>5</sup> *A she-wolf.*] Avarice.

Was at his heels, who in her leanness seem'd  
 Full of all wants, and many a land hath made  
 Disconsolate ere now. She with such fear  
 O'erwhelm'd me, at the sight of her appall'd,  
 That of the height all hope I lost. As one,  
 Who, with his gain elated, sees the time  
 When all unwares is gone, he inwardly  
 Mourns with heart griping anguish ; such  
 was I,

Haunted by that fell beast, never at peace,  
 Who coming o'er against me, by degrees  
 Impell'd me where the sun in silence rests.

While to the lower space with backward step  
 I fell, my ken discern'd the form of one  
 Whose voice seem'd faint through long disuse  
 of speech.

When him in that great desert I espied,  
 "Have mercy on me," cried I out aloud,  
 "Spirit ! or living man ! whate'er thou be."

He answer'd : "Now not man, man once I  
 was,

And born of Lombard parents, Mantuans both  
 By country, when the power of Julius<sup>1</sup> yet

<sup>1</sup> *When the power of Julius.]*

Nacqui sub Julio, anchorchè fosse tardi.

This is explained by the commentators : "Although it were rather late with respect to my birth, before Julius Caesar assumed the supreme authority, and made himself

Was scarcely firm. At Rome my life was past,  
Beneath the mild Augustus, in the time  
Of fabled deities and false. A bard  
Was I, and made Anchises' upright son  
The subject of my song, who came from Troy  
When the flames prey'd on Ilium's haughty  
towers.

But thou, say wherefore to such perils past  
Return'st thou ? wherefore not this pleasant  
mount

Ascendest, cause and source of all delight ? ”  
“ And art thou then that Virgil, that well-  
spring,

From which such copious floods of eloquence  
Have issued ? ” I with front abash'd replied.

“ Glory and light of all the tuneful train !  
May it avail me that I long with zeal  
Have sought thy volume, and with love  
immense

Have conn'd it o'er. My master thou, and  
guide !

Thou he from whom alone I have derived  
That style, which for its beauty into fame  
Exalts me. See the beast, from whom I fled.  
O save me from her, thou illustrious sage !

For every vein and pulse throughout my frame  
She hath made tremble." He, soon as he saw  
That I was weeping, answer'd, "Thou must  
needs

Another way pursue, if thou wouldest 'scape  
From out that savage wilderness. This beast,  
At whom thou criest, her way will suffer none  
To pass, and no less hindrance makes than  
death :

So bad and so accursed in her kind,  
That never sated is her ravenous will,  
Still after food more craving than before.  
To many an animal in wedlock vile  
She fastens, and shall yet to many more,  
Until that greyhound <sup>1</sup> come, who shall destroy  
Her with sharp pain. He will not life support  
By earth nor its base metals, but by love,  
Wisdom, and virtue ; and his land shall be  
The land 'twixt either Feltro.<sup>2</sup> In his might

---

<sup>1</sup> *That greyhound.*] This passage has been commonly understood as an eulogium on the liberal spirit of his Veronese patron, Can Grande della Scala.

<sup>2</sup> *'Twixt either Feltro.*] Verona, the country of Can della Scala, is situated between Feltro, a city in the Marca Trivigiana, and Monte Feltro, a city in the territory of Urbino. But Dante perhaps does not merely point out the place of Can Grande's nativity, for he may allude further to a prophecy, ascribed to Michael Scot, which imported that the "Dog of Verona would be lord of Padua and of all the Marca Trivigiana." It was fulfilled in the year 1329, a little before Can Grande's death. See G.

Shall safety to Italia's plains arise,  
 For whose fair realm, Camilla, virgin pure,  
 Nisus, Euryalus, and Turnus fell.

He, with incessant chase, through every town  
 Shall worry, until he to hell at length  
 Restore her, thence by envy first let loose.

I, for thy profit pondering, now devise  
 That thou mayst follow me ; and I, thy guide,  
 Will lead thee hence through an eternal space,  
 Where thou shalt hear despairing shrieks, and

see

Spirits of old tormented, who invoke  
 A second death ; and those next view, who  
 dwell

Content in fire,<sup>1</sup> for that they hope to come,  
 Whene'er the time may be, among the blest,  
 Into whose regions if thou then desire  
 To ascend, a spirit worthier <sup>2</sup> than I  
 Must lead thee, in whose charge, when I depart,  
 Thou shalt be left : for that Almighty King,

Villani, Hist. lib. 10. cap. cv. and cxli. and some lively criticism by Gasparo Gozzi, entitled *Giudizio degli Antichi Poeti*, etc., printed at the end of the Zatta edition of Dante, t. 4. part ii. p. 15. The prophecy, it is likely, was a forgery ; for Michael died before 1300, when Can Grande was only nine years old. See *Inferno*, xx. 115, and *Par.* xvii. 75.

<sup>1</sup> *Content in fire.*] The spirits in Purgatory.

<sup>2</sup> *A spirit worthier.*] Beatrice, who conducts the Poet through Paradise.

Who reigns above, a rebel to his law  
 Adjudges me ; and therefore hath decreed  
 That, to his city, none through me should  
 come.

He in all parts hath sway ; there rules, there  
 holds

His citadel and throne. O happy those,  
 Whom there he chooses ! ” I to him in few :  
 “ Bard ! by that God, whom thou didst not  
 adore,

I do beseech thee (that this ill and worse  
 I may escape) to lead me where thou said’st,  
 That I Saint Peter’s gate <sup>1</sup> may view, and those  
 Who, as thou tell’st, / are in such dismal  
 plight.”

Onward he moved, I close his steps pursued.

## CANTO II

### Argument.

After the invocation, which poets are used to prefix to their works, he shows, that, on a consideration of his own strength, he doubted whether it sufficed for the journey proposed to him, but that, being comforted by Virgil, he at last took courage, and followed him as his guide and master.

Now was the day departing, and the air,

<sup>1</sup> *Saint Peter’s gate.*] The gate of Purgatory, which the Poet feigns to be guarded by an angel placed on that station by St. Peter.

Imbrown'd with shadows, from their toils  
released

All animals on earth ; and I alone  
Prepared myself the conflict to sustain,  
Both of sad pity, and that perilous road,  
Which my unerring memory shall retrace.

O Muses ! O high genius ! now vouchsafe  
Your aid. O mind ! that all I saw hast kept  
Safe in a written record, here thy worth  
And eminent endowments come to proof.

I thus began : “ Bard ! thou who art my  
guide,  
Consider well, if virtue be in me  
Sufficient, ere to this high enterprise  
Thou trust me. Thou hast told that Silvius’  
sire,<sup>1</sup>

Yet clothed in corruptible flesh, among  
Th’ immortal tribes had entrance, and was  
there

Sensibly present. Yet if heaven’s great Lord,  
Almighty foe to ill, such favour show’d  
In contemplation of the high effect,  
Both what and who from him should issue  
forth,

It seems in reason’s judgment well deserved ;  
Sith he of Rome and of Rome’s empire wide,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Silvius’ sire.*] Aeneas.

In heaven's empyreal height was chosen sire ;  
Both which, if truth be spoken, were ordain'd  
And stablish'd for the holy place, where sits  
Who to great Peter's sacred chair succeeds.  
He from this journey, in thy song renown'd,  
Learn'd things, that to his victory gave rise  
And to the papal robe. In after-times  
The chosen vessel <sup>1</sup> also travel'd there,  
To bring us back assurance in that faith  
Which is the entrance to salvation's way.  
But I, why should I there presume ? or who  
Permits it ? not Æneas I, nor Paul.  
Myself I deem not worthy, and none else  
Will deem me. I, if on this voyage then  
I venture, fear it will in folly end.  
Thou, who art wise, better my meaning  
know'st,  
Than I can speak." As one, who unresolves  
What he hath late resolved, and with new  
thoughts  
Changes his purpose, from his first intent  
Removed ; e'en such was I on that dun coast,  
Waiting in thought my enterprise, at first  
So eagerly embraced. " If right thy words  
I scan," replied that shade magnanimous,

---

<sup>1</sup> *The chosen vessel.] St. Paul. Acts ix. 15. " But the Lord said unto him. Go thy way ; for he is a chosen*

“ Thy soul is by vile fear assail’d, which oft  
 So overcasts a man, that he recoils  
 From noblest resolution, like a beast  
 At some false semblance in the twilight gloom.  
 That from this terror thou mayst free thyself,  
 I will instruct thee why I came, and what  
 I heard in that same instant, when for thee  
 Grief touch’d me first. I was among the tribe,  
 Who rest suspended, when a dame, so blest  
 And lovely I besought her to command,  
 Call’d me ; her eyes were brighter than the star  
 Of day ; and she, with gentle voice and soft,  
 Angelically tuned, her speech address’d :  
 ‘ O courteous shade of Mantua ! thou whose  
 fame  
 ‘ Yet lives, and shall live long as nature lasts !  
 ‘ A friend, not of my fortune but myself,  
 ‘ On the wide desert in his road has met  
 ‘ Hindrance so great, that he through fear has  
 turn’d.  
 ‘ Now much I dread lest he past help have  
 stray’d,  
 ‘ And I be risen too late for his relief,  
 ‘ From what in heaven of him I heard. Speed  
 now,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Who rest suspended.*] The spirits in Limbo, neither admitted to a state of glory nor doomed to punishment.

' And by thy eloquent persuasive tongue,  
 ' And by all means for his deliverance meet,  
 ' Assist him. So to me will comfort spring.  
 ' I, who now bid thee on this errand forth,  
 ' Am Beatrice ; <sup>1</sup> from a place I come  
 ' Revisited with joy. Love brought me thence,  
 ' Who prompts my speech. When in my  
     Master's sight  
 ' I stand, thy praise to him I oft will tell.'  
 " She then was silent, and I thus began :  
 ' O Lady ! by whose influence alone  
 ' Mankind excels whatever is contain'd <sup>2</sup>  
 ' Within that heaven which hath the smallest  
     orb,  
 ' So thy command delights me, that to obey,  
 ' If it were done already, would seem late.  
 ' No need hast thou farther to speak thy will :  
 ' Yet tell the reason, why thou art not loth  
 ' To leave that ample space, where to return  
 ' Thou burnest, for this centre here beneath.'  
 " She then : ' Since thou so deeply wouldest  
     inquire,  
 ' I will instruct thee briefly why no dread

<sup>1</sup> *Beatrice.*] The daughter of Folco Portinari, who is here invested with the character of celestial wisdom or theology.

<sup>2</sup> *Whatever is contain'd.*] Every other thing comprised within the lunar heaven, which, being the lowest of all,

' Hinders my entrance here. Those things  
 alone  
 ' Are to be fear'd whence evil may proceed ;  
 ' None else, for none are terrible beside.  
 ' I am so framed by God, thanks to his grace !  
 ' That any sufferance of your misery  
 ' Touches me not, nor flame of that fierce fire  
 ' Assails me. In high heaven a blessed dame<sup>1</sup>  
 ' Besides, who mourns with such effectual grief  
 ' That hindrance, which I send thee to remove,  
 ' That God's stern judgment to her will inclines.  
 ' To Lucia<sup>2</sup> calling, her she thus bespake :  
 " Now doth thy faithful servant need thy aid,  
 " And I commend him to thee." At her word  
 ' Sped Lucia, of all cruelty the foe,  
 ' And coming to the place, where I abode  
 ' Seated with Rachel, her of ancient days,  
 ' She thus address'd me : " Thou true praise  
 of God !  
 " Beatrice ! why is not thy succour lent  
 " To him, who so much loved thee, as to leave  
 " For thy sake all the multitude admires ?

<sup>1</sup> *A blessed dame.*] The Divine Mercy.

<sup>2</sup> *Lucia.*] The enlightening Grace of Heaven ; as it is commonly explained. But Lombardi has well observed, that as our Poet places her in the *Paradiso*, c. xxxii., amongst the souls of the blessed, so it is probable that she, like Beatrice, had a real existence ; and he accordingly supposes her to have been Saint Lucia the martyr, although she is here representative of an abstract idea.

" Dost thou not hear how pitiful his wail,  
 " Nor mark the death, which in the torrent  
     flood,  
 " Swoln mightier than a sea, him struggling  
     holds ? "

' Ne'er among men did any with such speed  
 ' Haste to their profit, flee from their annoy,  
 ' As, when these words were spoken, I came  
     here,  
 ' Down from my blessed seat, trusting the force  
 ' Of thy pure eloquence, which thee, and all  
 ' Who well have mark'd it, into honour brings.'  
 " When she had ended, her bright beaming  
     eyes

Tearful she turned aside ; whereat I felt  
 Redoubled zeal to serve thee. As she will'd,  
 Thus am I come : I saved thee from the beast,  
 Who thy near way across the goodly mount  
 Prevented. What is this comes o'er thee then ?  
 Why, why dost thou hang back ? why in thy  
     breast

Harbour vile fear ? why hast not courage there,  
 And noble daring ; since three maids,<sup>1</sup> so blest,  
 Thy safety plan, e'en in the court of heaven ;  
 And so much certain good my words forebode ? "

As florets, by the frosty air of night

<sup>1</sup> Three maids.] The Divine Mercy, Lucia, and Beatrice.

Bent down and closed, when day has blanch'd  
 their leaves,  
 Rise all unfolded on their spiry stems ;  
 So was my fainting vigour new restored,  
 And to my heart such kindly courage ran,  
 That I as one undaunted soon replied :  
 " O full of pity she, who undertook  
 My succour ! and thou kind, who didst perform  
 So soon her true behest ! With such desire  
 Thou hast disposed me to renew my voyage,  
 That my first purpose fully is resumed.  
 Lead on : one only will is in us both.  
 Thou art my guide, my master thou, and lord."  
 So spake I ; and when he had onward moved,  
 I enter'd on the deep and woody way.

## CANTO III

## Argument.

Dante, following Virgil, comes to the gate of Hell ; where, after having read the dreadful words that are written thereon, they both enter. Here, as he understands from Virgil, those were punished who had past their time (for living it could not be called) in a state of apathy and indifference both to good and evil. Then pursuing their way, they arrive at the river Acheron ; and there find the old ferryman Charon, who takes the spirits over to the opposite shore ; which as soon as Dante reaches, he is seized with terror, and falls into a trance.

" THROUGH me you pass into the city of woe :  
 Through me you pass into eternal pain :

Through me among the people lost for aye.  
 Justice the founder of my fabric moved :  
 To rear me was the task of power divine,  
 Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.<sup>1</sup>  
 Before me things create were none, save things  
 Eternal, and eternal I endure.  
 All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

Such characters, in colour dim, I mark'd  
 Over a portal's lofty arch inscribed.  
 Whereat I thus : " Master, these words import  
 Hard meaning." He as one prepared replied :  
 ' Here thou must all distrust behind thee leave ;  
 Here be vile fear extinguish'd. We are come  
 Where I have told thee we shall see the souls  
 To misery doom'd, who intellectual good  
 Have lost." And when his hand he had  
 stretched forth

To mine, with pleasant looks, whence I was  
 cheer'd,  
 Into that secret place he led me on.

Here sighs, with lamentations and loud  
 moans,  
 Resounded through the air pierced by no star,  
 That e'en I wept at entering. Various tongues,  
 Horrible languages, outcries of woe,

<sup>1</sup> ————— *Power divine,  
 Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.]*  
 The three Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,  
 With hands together smote that swell'd the  
 sounds,

Made up a tumult, that for ever whirls  
 Round through that air with solid darkness  
 stain'd

Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.

I then, with error yet encompass, cried :  
 " O master ! what is this I hear ? what race  
 Are these, who seem so overcome with woe ? "

He thus to me : " This miserable fate  
 Suffer the wretched souls of those, who lived  
 Without or praise or blame, with that ill band  
 Of angels mix'd, who nor rebellious proved,  
 Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves  
 Were only. From his bounds Heaven drove  
 them forth,

Not to impair his lustre ; nor the depth  
 Of Hell receives them, lest the accursed tribe <sup>1</sup>  
 Should glory thence with exultation vain."

I then : " Master ! what doth aggrieve them  
 thus,  
 That they lament so loud ? " He straight re-  
 plied :

" That will I tell thee briefly. These of death

---

<sup>1</sup> *Lest the accursed tribe.]* Lest the rebellious angels should exult at seeing those who were neutral, and therefore less guilty, condemned to the same punishment with themselves.

No hope may entertain : and their blind life  
 So meanly passes, that all other lots  
 They envy. Fame of them the world hath  
 none,

Nor suffers ; mercy and justice scorn them  
 both.

Speak not of them, but look, and pass them by."

And I, who straightway look'd, beheld a flag,  
 Which whirling ran around so rapidly,  
 That it no pause obtain'd : and following came  
 Such a long train of spirits, I should ne'er  
 Have thought that death so many had de-  
 spoil'd.

When some of these I recognized, I saw  
 And knew the shade of him, who to base fear <sup>1</sup>  
 Yielding, abjured his high estate. Forthwith,  
 I understood, for certain, this the tribe

<sup>1</sup> ————— *Who to base fear*

*Yielding, abjured his high estate. — ]*

This is commonly understood of Celestine the Fifth, who abdicated the papal power in 1294. Venturi mentions a work written by Innocenzo Barcellini, of the Celestine order, and printed at Milan in 1701, in which an attempt is made to put a different interpretation on this passage. Lombardi would apply it to some one of Dante's fellow-citizens, who, refusing, through avarice or want of spirit to support the party of the Bianchi at Florence, had been the main occasion of the miseries that befel them. But the testimony of Fazio degli Uberti, who lived so near the time of our author, seems almost decisive on this point. He expressly speaks of the Pope Celestine as being in hell.

Of those ill spirits both to God displeasing  
And to his foes. These wretches, who ne'er  
lived,

Went on in nakedness, and sorely stung  
By wasps and hornets, which bedew'd their  
cheeks

With blood, that, mix'd with tears, dropp'd  
to their feet,

And by disgustful worms was gathered there.

Then looking farther onwards, I beheld  
A throng upon the shore of a great stream :  
Whereat I thus : "Sir ! grant me now to know  
Whom here we view, and whence impell'd they  
seem

So eager to pass o'er, as I discern  
Through the blear light ?" He thus to me in  
few :

" This shalt thou know, soon as our steps arrive  
Beside the woeful tide of Acheron."

Then with eyes downward cast, and filled  
with shame,

Fearing my words offensive to his ear,  
Till we had reach'd the river, I from speech  
Abstain'd. And lo ! toward us in a bark  
Comes on an old man, hoary white with eld,  
Crying, " Woe to you, wicked spirits ! hope not  
Ever to see the sky again. I come  
To take you to the other shore across,

Into eternal darkness, there to dwell  
 In fierce heat and in ice. And thou, who there  
 Standest, live spirit ! get thee hence, and leave  
 These who are dead." But soon as he beheld  
 I left them not, " By other way," said he,  
 " By other haven shalt thou come to shore,  
 Not by this passage ; thee a nimbler boat<sup>1</sup>  
 Must carry." Then to him thus spake my  
 guide

" Charon ! thyself torment not : so 'tis will'd,  
 Where will and power are one : ask thou no  
 more."

Straightway in silence fell the shaggy cheeks  
 Of him, the boatman o'er the livid lake,  
 Around whose eyes glared wheeling flames.

Meanwhile

Those spirits, faint and naked, colour changed,  
 And gnash'd their teeth, soon as the cruel words  
 They heard. God and their parents they  
 blasphemed,

The human kind, the place, the time, and seed,  
 That did engender them and give them birth.

Then all together sorely wailing drew  
 To the curst strand, that every man must pass  
 Who fears not God. Charon, demoniac form,

<sup>1</sup> *A nimbler boat.]* He perhaps alludes to the bark  
 " swift and light," in which the angel conducts the spirits  
 to Purgatory. See Purg. 7. ii. 4.

With eyes of burning coal, collects them all,  
 Beckoning, and each that lingers, with his oar  
 Strikes. As fall off the light autumnal leaves,  
 One still another following till the bough  
 Strews all its honours on the earth beneath ;  
 E'en in like manner Adam's evil brood  
 Cast themselves, one by one, down from the  
 shore,

Each at a beck, as falcon at his call.<sup>1</sup>

Thus go they over through the umber'd  
 wave ;

And ever they on the opposing bank  
 Be landed, on this side another throng  
 Still gathers. "Son," thus spake the courteous  
 guide

" Those who die subject to the wrath of God  
 All here together come from every clime,  
 And to o'erpass the river are not loth :  
 For so heaven's justice goads them on, that  
 fear

Is turn'd into desire. Hence ne'er hath past  
 Good spirit. If of thee Charon complain,  
 Now mayst thou know the import of his words,"

This said, the gloomy region trembling shook  
 So terribly, that yet with clammy dews

<sup>1</sup> *As falcon at his call.*] This is Vellutello's explanation, and seems preferable to that commonly given : "as a bird that is enticed to the cage by the call of another."

Fear chills my brow. The sad earth gave a  
blast,  
That, lightening, shot forth a vermillion flame  
Which all my senses conquer'd quite, and I  
Down dropp'd, as one with sudden slumber  
seized.

---

## CANTO IV

## Argument.

The Poet, being roused by a clap of thunder, and following his guide onwards, descends into Limbo, which is the first circle of Hell, where he finds the souls of those, who, although they have lived virtuously and have not to suffer for great sins, nevertheless, through lack of baptism, merit not the bliss of Paradise. Hence he is led on by Virgil to descend into the second circle.

BROKE the deep slumber in my brain a crash  
Of heavy thunder, that I shook myself,  
As one by main force roused. Risen upright,  
My rested eyes I moved around, and search'd  
With fixed ken, to know what place it was  
Wherein I stood. For certain, on the brink  
I found me of the lamentable vale,  
The dread abyss, that joins a thundrous sound  
Of plaints innumerable. Dark and deep,  
And thick with cloud o'erspread, mine eyc in  
vain

Explored its bottom, nor could aught discern.

" Now let us to the blind world there beneath  
Descend ; " the bard began, all pale of look :  
" I go the first, and thou shalt follow next,"

Then I, his alter'd hue perceiving, thus :  
" How may I speed, if thou yieldest to dread,  
Who still art wont to comfort me in doubt ? "

He then : " The anguish of that race below  
With pity stains my cheek, which thou for fear  
Mistakest. Let us on. Our length of way  
Urges to haste." Onward, this said, he  
moved ;

And entering led me with him, on the bounds  
Of the first circle that surrounds the abyss.

Here, as mine ear could note, no plaint was  
heard

Except of sighs, that made the eternal air  
Tremble, not caused by tortures, but from  
grief

Felt by those multitudes, many and vast,  
Of men, women, and infants. Then to me  
The gentle guide : " Inquirest thou not what  
spirits

Are these which thou beholdest ? Ere thou  
pass

Farther, I would thou know, that these of sin  
Were blameless ; and if aught they merited,  
It profits not, since baptism was not theirs,  
The portal to thy faith. If they before

The Gospel lived, they served not God aright ;  
 And among such am I. For these defects,  
 And for no other evil, we are lost ;  
 Only so far afflicted, that we live  
 Desiring without hope." Sore grief assail'd  
 My heart at hearing this, for well I knew  
 Suspended in that Limbo many a soul  
 Of mighty worth. "O tell me, sire revered !  
 Tell me, my master !" I began, through wish  
 Of full assurance in that holy faith  
 Which vanquishes all error ; "say, did e'er  
 Any, or through his own or other's merit,  
 Come forth from thence, who afterward was  
 blest ? "

Piercing the secret purport<sup>1</sup> of my speech,  
 He answer'd : "I was new to that estate,  
 When I beheld a puissant one<sup>2</sup> arrive  
 Amongst us, with victorious trophy crown'd.  
 He forth the shade of our first parent drew,  
 Abel his child and Noah righteous man,  
 Of Moses lawgiver for faith approved,  
 Of patriarch Abraham, and David king,  
 Israel with his sire and with his sons,

<sup>1</sup> *Secret purport.*] Lombardi well observes, that Dante seems to have been restrained by awe and reverence from uttering the name of Christ in this place of torment ; and that for the same cause, probably, it does not occur once throughout the whole of this first part of the poem.

<sup>2</sup> *A puissant one.*] Our Saviour.

Nor without Rachel whom so hard he won,  
And others many more, whom he to bless  
Exalted. Before these, be thou assured,  
No spirit of human kind was ever saved."

We, while he spake, ceased not our onward  
road,

Still passing through the wood ; for so I name  
Those spirits thick beset. We were not far  
On this side from the summit, when I kenn'd  
A flame, that o'er the darken'd hemisphere  
Prevailing shined. Yet we a little space  
Were distant, not so far but I in part  
Discover'd that a tribe in honour high  
That place possess'd. "O, thou, who every  
art

And science valuest ! who are these, that boast  
Such honour, separate from all the rest ? "

He answer'd : " The renown of their great  
names,

That echoes through your world above, ac-  
quires

Favour in heaven, which holds them thus ad-  
vanced."

Meantime a voice I heard : " Honour the bard  
Sublime ! his shade returns, that left us late ! "  
No sooner ceased the sound, than I beheld  
Four mighty spirits toward us bend their steps,  
Of semblance neither sorrowful nor glad.

When thus my master kind began : “ Mark  
him

Who in his right hand bears that falchion keen,  
The other three preceding, as their lord.  
This is that Homer, of all bards supreme :  
Flaccus the next, in satire’s vein excelling ;  
The third is Naso ; Lucan is the last.  
Because they all that appellation own,  
With which the voice singly accosted me,  
Honouring they greet me thus, and well they  
judge.”

So I beheld united the bright school  
Of him the monarch of sublimest song,<sup>1</sup>  
That o’er the others like an eagle soars.

When they together short discourse had held,  
They turn’d to me, with salutation kind  
Beckoning me ; at the which my master  
smiled :

Nor was this all ; but greater honour still  
They gave me, for they made me of their tribe ;  
And I was sixth amid so learn’d a band.

Far as the luminous beacon on we pass’d,

---

<sup>1</sup> *The monarch of sublimest song.]* Homer. It appears from a passage in the *Convito*, that there was no Latin translation of Homer in Dante’s time. “ *Sappia ciascuno*,” etc. p. 20. “ Every one should know, that nothing, harmonized by musical enchantment, can be transmuted from one tongue into another without breaking all its sweetness and harmony. And this is the reason why Homer has never been turned from Greek into Latin, as the other writers we have of theirs.”

Speaking of matters, then befitting well  
 To speak, now fitter left untold. At foot  
 Of a magnificent castle we arrived,  
 Seven times with lofty walls begirt, and round  
 Defended by a pleasant stream. O'er this  
 As o'er dry land we pass'd. Next, through  
 seven gates,  
 I with those sages enter'd, and we came  
 Into a mead with lively verdure fresh.

There dwelt a race, who slow their eyes  
 around  
 Majestically moved, and in their port  
 Bore eminent authority : they spake  
 Seldom, but all their words were tuneful  
 sweet.

We to one side retired, into a place  
 Open and bright and lofty, whence each one  
 Stood manifest to view. Incontinent,  
 There on the green enamel of the plain  
 Were shown me the great spirits, by whose  
 sight

I am exalted in my own esteem.

Electra<sup>1</sup> there I saw accompanied  
 By many, among whom Hector I knew,

<sup>1</sup> *Electra.*] The daughter of Atlas, and mother of Dardanus, the founder of Troy. See Virg. *Aen.* lib. 8. 134, as referred to by Dante in the treatise *De Monarchia*, lib. 2.

Anchises' pious son, and with hawk's eye  
 Cæsar all arm'd, and by Camilla there  
 Penthesilea. On the other side,  
 Old king Latinus seated by his child  
 Lavinia, and that Brutus I beheld  
 Who Tarquin chased, Lucretia, Cato's wife  
 Marcia, with Julia<sup>1</sup> and Cornelia there ;  
 And sole apart retired, the Soldan fierce.<sup>2</sup>

Then when a little more I raised my brow,  
 I spied the master of the sapient throng,<sup>3</sup>  
 Seated amid the philosophic train.  
 Him all admire, all pay him reverence due.

<sup>1</sup> *Julia.*] The daughter of Julius Cæsar, and wife of Pompey.

<sup>2</sup> *The Soldan fierce.*] Saladin, or Salaheddin, the rival of Richard Coeur de Lion. See D'Herbelot, *Bibl. Orient*, the Life of Saladin, by Bohao'edin Ebn Shedad, published by Albert Schultens, with a Latin translation; and Knolles' *Hist. of the Turks*, p. 57 to 73. "About this time (1193) died the great Sultan Saladin, the greatest terror of the Christians, who, mindful of man's fragility and the vanity of worldly honours, commanded at the time of his death no solemnity to be used at his burial, but only his shirt, in manner of an ensign, made fast unto the point of a lance, to be carried before his dead body as an ensign, a plain priest going before, and crying aloud unto the people in this sort, 'Saladin, Conqueror of the East, of all the greatness and riches he had in his life, carrieth not with him anything more than his shirt.' A sight worthy so great a king, as wanted nothing to his eternal commendation more than the true knowledge of his salvation in Christ Jesus. He reigned about sixteen years with great honour." He is introduced by Petrarch in the *Triumph of Fame*, c. ii.; and by Boccaccio in the *Decameron*, G. x. N. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *The master of the sapient throng.*] Aristotle, else where in the poem referred to as the "Stagyrite."

There Socrates and Plato both I mark'd  
 Nearest to him in rank, Democritus,  
 Who sets the world at chance,<sup>1</sup> Diogenes,  
 With Heraclitus, and Empedocles,  
 And Anaxagoras, and Thales sage,  
 Zeno, and Dioscorides well read  
 In nature's secret lore. Orpheus I mark'd  
 And Linus, Tully and moral Seneca,  
 Euclid and Ptolemy, Hippocrates,  
 Galenus, Avicen, and him who made  
 That commentary vast, Averroes.<sup>2</sup>

Of all to speak at full were vain attempt ;  
 For my wide theme so urges, that oft-times  
 My words fall short of what bechanced. In  
 two

The six associates part. Another way  
 My sage guide leads me from that air serene,  
 Into a climate ever vex'd with storms :  
 And to a part I come, where no light shines.

<sup>1</sup> ————— *Democritus,*

*Who sets the world at chance.]*

Democritus, who maintained the world to have been formed by the fortuitous concourse of atoms.

<sup>2</sup> ————— *Him who made*

*That commentary vast, Averroes.]*

Averroes, called by the Arabians Roschd, translated and commented the works of Aristotle.

## CANTO V

## Argument,

Coming into the second circle of Hell, Dante at the entrance beholds Minos the Infernal Judge, by whom he is admonished to beware how he enters those regions. Here he witnesses the punishment of carnal sinners, who are tossed about ceaselessly in the dark air by the most furious winds. Amongst these, he meets with Francesca of Rimini, through pity at whose sad tale he falls fainting to the ground.

FROM the first circle I descended thus  
Down to the second, which, a lesser space  
Embracing, so much more of grief contains,  
Provoking bitter moans. There Minos stands,  
Grinning with ghastly feature : he, of all  
Who enter, strict examining the crimes,  
Gives sentence, and dismisses them beneath,  
According as he foldeth him around :  
For when before him comes the ill-fated soul,  
It all confesses ; and that judge severe  
Of sins, considering what place in hell  
Suits the transgression, with his tail so oft  
Himself encircles, as degrees beneath  
He dooms it to descend. Before him stand  
Alway a numerous throng ; and in his turn  
Each one to judgment passing, speaks, and  
hears  
His fate, thence downward to his dwelling  
hurl'd.

" O thou ! who to this residence of woe  
Approachest ? " when he saw me coming,  
cried

Minos, relinquishing his dread employ,  
" Look how thou enter here ; beware in whom  
Thou place thy trust ; let not the entrance  
broad

Deceive thee to thy harm." To him my guide :  
" Wherefore exclaimest ? Hinder not his way  
By destiny appointed ; so 'tis will'd,  
Where will and power are one. Ask thou no  
more."

Now 'gin the rueful wailings to be heard.  
Now am I come where many a plaining voice  
Smites on mine ear. Into a place I came  
Where light was silent all. Bellowing there  
groan'd

A noise, as of a sea in tempest torn  
By warring winds. The stormy blast of hell  
With ruthless fury drives the spirits on,  
Whirl'd round and dash'd amain with sore  
annoy.

When they arrive before the ruinous sweep,  
There shrieks are heard, there lamentations,  
moans,  
And blasphemies 'gainst the good Power in  
Heaven.

I understood, that to this torment sad

The carnal sinners are condemn'd, in whom  
 Reason by lust is sway'd. As in large troops  
 And multitudinous, when winter reigns,  
 The starlings on their wings are borne abroad ;  
 So bears the tyrannous gust those evil souls.  
 On this side and on that, above, below,  
 It drives them : hope of rest to solace them  
 Is none, nor e'en of milder pang. As cranes,<sup>1</sup>  
 Chanting their dolorous notes, traverse the  
 sky,

Stretch'd out in long array ; so I beheld  
 Spirits, who came loud wailing, hurried on  
 By their dire doom. Then I : " Instructor !  
 who

Are these, by the black air so scourged ?"—

" The first

'Mong those, of whom thou question'st,' he  
 replied,

" O'er many tongues was empress. She in  
 vice

<sup>1</sup> *As cranes.*] This simile is imitated by Lorenzo de Medici, in his *Ambra*, a poem, first published by Mr. Roscoe, in the Appendix to his *Life of Lorenzo* :

Marking the tracts of air, the clamorous cranes  
 Wheel their due flight in varied ranks descried ;  
 And each with outstretch'd neck his rank maintains,  
 In marshal'd order through the ethereal void.

Roscoe, vol. i. c. v. p. 257, 4to edit.

Compare Homer, *Il.* iii. 3 ; Virgil, *Æn.* lib. 10. 264 ; Oppian, *Halieut.* lib. 1. 620 ; Ruccellai, *Le Api*, 942 ; and Dante's *Purgatorio*, xxiv. 63.

Of luxury was so shameless that she made  
Liking be lawful by promulg'd decree,  
To clear the blame she had herself incurr'd.  
This is Semiramis, of whom 'tis writ  
That she succeeded Ninus her espoused ;  
And held the land, which now the Soldan rules.  
The next in amorous fury slew herself,  
And to Sicheus' ashes broke her faith :  
Then follows Cleopatra, lustful queen."

There mark'd I Helen, for whose sake so long  
The time was fraught with evil ; there the  
great

Achilles, who with love fought to the end.  
Paris I saw, and Tristan ; and beside,  
A thousand more he show'd me, and by name  
Pointed them out, whom love bereaved of life.

When I had heard my sage instructor name  
Those dames and knights of antique days,  
o'erpower'd

By pity, well-nigh in amaze my mind  
Was lost ; and I began : " Bard ! willingly  
I would address those two together coming,  
Which seem so light before the wind." He  
thus :

" Note thou, when nearer they to us approach.  
Then by that love which carries them along,  
Entreat ; and they will come." Soon as the  
wind

Sway'd them towards us, I thus framed my speech :

" O wearied spirits ! come, and hold discourse  
 With us, if by none else restrain'd." As doves  
 By fond desire invited, on wide wings  
 And firm, to their sweet nest returning home,  
 Cleave the air, wafted by their will along ;  
 Thus issued, from that troop where Dido ranks,  
 They, through the ill air speeding : with such  
 force

My cry prevail'd, by strong affection urged.

" O gracious creature and benign ! who go'st  
 Visiting, through this element obscure.<sup>1</sup>  
 Us, who the world with bloody stain imbruued ;  
 If, for a friend, the King of all, we own'd,  
 Our prayer to him should for thy peace arise,  
 Since thou hast pity on our evil plight.  
 Of whatsoe'er to hear or to discourse  
 It pleases thee, that will we hear, of that  
 Freely with thee discourse, while e'er the wind,

<sup>1</sup> Element obscure.] " L'aer perso." Much is said by the commentators concerning the exact sense of the word " perso." It cannot be explained in clearer terms than those used by Dante himself in his *Convito* : " Il perso è un colore misto di purpureo e nero, ma vince il nero," p. 185. " It is a colour mixed of purple and black, but the black prevails." The word recurs several times in this poem. Chaucer also uses it, in the *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, Doctour of Phisike :

As now, is mute. The land,<sup>1</sup> that gave me birth,

Is situate on the coast, where Po descends To rest in ocean with his sequent streams.

"Love, that in gentle heart is quickly learnt,<sup>2</sup>

Entangled him by that fair form, from me Ta'en in such cruel sort, as grieves me still : Love, that denial takes from none beloved, Caught me with pleasing him so passing well, That, as thou seest, he yet deserts me not.

Love brought us to one death : Caïna<sup>3</sup> waits The soul, who spilt our life." Such were their words ;

At hearing which, downward I bent my looks,

<sup>1</sup> *The land.] Ravenna.*

<sup>2</sup> *Love, that in gentle heart is quickly learnt.]*

Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende.

A line taken by Marino, *Adone*, c. cxli. st. 251.

That the reader of the original may not be misled as to the exact sense of the word "s'apprende," which I have rendered "is learnt," it may be right to apprise him that it signifies "is caught," and that it is a metaphor from a thing taking fire. Thus it is used by Guido Guinicelli, whom indeed our Poet seems here to have had in view :

Fuoco d'Amore in gentil cor s'apprende,  
Come vertute in pietra preziosa.

*Sonetti, etc., di diversi Antichi Toscani*, ediz. Giunti, 1527, lib. 9. p. 107.

The fire of love in gentle heart is caught,  
As virtue in the precious stone.

<sup>3</sup> *Caina.] The place to which murderers are doomed.*

And held them there so long, that the bard  
cried :

“ What art thou pondering ? ” I in answer  
thus :

“ Alas ! by what sweet thoughts, what fond  
desire

Must they at length to that ill pass have  
reach’d ! ”

Then turning, I to them my speech address’d,  
And thus began : “ Francesca ! <sup>1</sup> your sad  
fate

Even to tears my grief and pity moves.

But tell me ; in the time of your sweet sighs,  
By what, and how Love granted, that ye knew  
Your yet uncertain wishes ? ” She replied :  
“ No greater grief than to remember days  
Of joy, when misery is at hand. That kens  
Thy learn’d instructor. Yet so eagerly

<sup>1</sup> *Francesca.*] Francesca, daughter of Guido da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, was given by her father in marriage to Lanciotto, son of Malatesta, lord of Rimini, a man of extraordinary courage, but deformed in his person. His brother Paolo, who unhappily possessed those graces which the husband of Francesca wanted, engaged her affections ; and being taken in adultery, they were both put to death by the enraged Lanciotto. See Notes to Canto xxvii. v. 38 and 43. Troya relates, that they were buried together ; and that three centuries after, the bodies were found at Rimini, whither they had been removed from Pesaro, with the silken garments yet fresh. *Vetro Allegorico di Dante*, ediz. 1826, p. 33. Mr. Leigh Hunt has expanded the episode into a beautiful

If thou art bent to know the primal root,  
 From whence our love gat being, I will do  
 As one, who weeps and tells his tale. One day,  
 For our delight we read of Lancelot,<sup>1</sup>  
 How him love thrall'd. Alone we were, and no  
 Suspicion near us. Oft-times by that reading  
 Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue  
 Fled from our alter'd cheek. But at one  
 point

Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,  
 The wished smile, so rapturously kiss'd  
 By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er  
 From me shall separate, at once my lips  
 All trembling kiss'd. The book and writer  
 both

Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day  
 We read no more.”<sup>2</sup> While thus one spirit  
 spake,

The other wail'd so sorely, that heart-struck  
 I, through compassion fainting seem'd not far,  
 From death, and like a corse fell to the ground.

<sup>1</sup> *Lancelot.*] One of the Knights of the Round Table, and the lover of Ginevra, or Guinever, celebrated in romance. The incident alluded to seems to have made a strong impression on the imagination of Dante, who introduces it again, in the *Paradiso*, Canto xvi.

<sup>2</sup> ————— *In its leaves that day*

*We read no more.*] Nothing can exceed the delicacy with which Francesca in these words intimates her guilt.

## CANTO VI

---

Argument.

On his recovery, the Poet finds himself in the third circle, where the gluttonous are punished. Their torment is to lie in the mire, under a continual and heavy storm of hail, snow, and discoloured water ; Cerberus meanwhile barking over them with his threefold throat, and rending them piecemeal. One of these, who on earth was named Ciacco, foretells the divisions with which Florence is about to be distracted. Dante proposes a question to his guide, who solves it ; and they proceed towards the fourth circle.

MY sense reviving, that erewhile had droop'd  
 With pity for the kindred shades, whence grief  
 O'ercame me wholly, straight around I see  
 New torments, new tormented souls, which  
 way

Soe'er I move, or turn, or bend my sight.  
 In the third circle I arrive, of showers  
 Ceaseless, accursed, heavy and cold, unchanged  
 For ever, both in kind and in degree.  
 Large hail, discolour'd water, sleety flaw  
 Through the dun midnight air stream'd down  
 amain :

Stank all the land whereon that tempest fell.  
 Cerberus, cruel monster, fierce and strange,  
 Through his wide threefold throat, barks as a  
 dog

Over the multitude immersed beneath.  
 His eyes glare crimson, black his unctuous

His belly large, and claw'd the hands, with  
which

He tears the spirits, flays them, and their  
limbs

Piecemeal disparts. Howling there spread, as  
curs,

Under the rainy deluge, with one side  
The other screening, oft they roll them round,  
A wretched, godless crew. When that great  
worm

Described us, savage Cerberus, he oped  
His jaws, and the fangs show'd us ; not a limb  
Of him but trembled. Then my guide, his  
palms

Expanding on the ground, thence fill'd with  
earth

Raised them, and cast it in his ravenous maw.  
E'en as a dog, that yelling bays for food  
His keeper, when the morsel comes, lets fall  
His fury, bent alone with eager haste  
To swallow it ; so dropp'd the loathsome  
cheeks

Of demon Cerberus, who thundering stuns  
The spirits, that they for deafness wish in vain.

We, o'er the shades thrown prostrate by the  
brunt

Of the heavy tempest passing, set our feet  
Upon their emptiness, that substance seem'd.

They all along the earth extended lay,  
Save one, that sudden raised himself to sit,  
Soon as that way he saw us pass. "O thou!"  
He cried, "who through the infernal shades art  
led,

Own, if again thou know'st me. Thou wast  
framed

Or ere my frame was broken." I replied:  
"The anguish thou endurest perchance so  
takes

Thy form from my remembrance, that it seems  
As if I saw thee never. But inform  
Me who thou art, that in a place so sad  
Art set, and in such torment, that although  
Other be greater, none disgusteth more."

He thus in answer to my words rejoin'd:  
"The city, heap'd with envy to the brim,  
Ay, that the measure overflows its bounds,  
Held me in brighter days. Ye citizens  
Were wont to name me Ciacco.<sup>1</sup> For the sin  
Of gluttony, damned vice, beneath this rain,  
E'en as thou seest, I with fatigue am worn:  
Nor I sole spirit in this woe: all these  
Have by like crime incur'd like punishment."

No more he said, and I my speech resumed:

<sup>1</sup> *Ciacco.*] So called from his inordinate appetite; Ciacco, in Italian, signifying a pig. The real name of this glutton has not been transmitted to us. He is introduced in Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Giorn. ix. Nov. 8.

"Ciacco ! thy dire affliction grieves me much,  
 Even to tears. But tell me if thou know'st,  
 What shall at length befall the citizens  
 Of the divided city ;<sup>1</sup> whether any  
 Just one inhabit there : and tell the cause,  
 Whence jarring Discord hath assail'd it thus."

He then : "After long striving they will  
 come

To blood ; and the wild party from the woods<sup>2</sup>  
 Will chase the other<sup>3</sup> with much injury forth.  
 Then it behoves that this must fall,<sup>4</sup> within  
 Three solar circles ;<sup>5</sup> and the other rise  
 By borrow'd force of one, who under shore  
 Now rests.<sup>6</sup> It shall a long space hold aloof  
 Its forehead, keeping under heavy weight  
 The other opprest, indignant at the load,  
 And grieving sore. The just are two in num-  
 ber,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The divided city.]* The city of Florence, divided into the Bianchi and Neri factions.

<sup>2</sup> *The wild party from the woods.]* So called, because it was headed by Veri de' Cerchi, whose family had lately come into the city from Acone, and the woody country of the Val di Nievole.

<sup>3</sup> *The other.]* The opposite party of the Neri, at the head of which was Corso Donati.

<sup>4</sup> *This must fall.]* The Bianchi.

<sup>5</sup> *Three solar circles.]* Three years.

<sup>6</sup> *— Of one, who under shore*

*Now rests.]*

Charles of Valois, by whose means the Neri were replaced.

<sup>7</sup> *The just are two in number.]* Who these two were, the commentators are not agreed. Some understand

But they neglected. Avarice, envy, pride,  
 Three fatal sparks, have set the hearts of all  
 On fire." Here ceased the lamentable sound ;  
 And I continued thus : " Still would I learn  
 More from thee, further parley still entreat.  
 Of Farinata and Tegghiaio<sup>1</sup> say,  
 They who so well deserved ; of Giacopo,<sup>2</sup>  
 Arrigo, Mosca,<sup>3</sup> and the rest, who bent  
 Their minds on working good. Oh ! tell me  
 where

They bide, and to their knowledge let me come.

them to be Dante himself and his friend Guido Cavalcanti. But this would argue a presumption, which our Poet himself elsewhere contradicts ; for, in the *Purgatorio*, he owns his consciousness of not being exempted from one at least of "the three fatal sparks, which had set the hearts of all on fire." See Canto xiii. 126. Others refer the encomium to Barduccio and Giovanni Vespiagnano, adducing the following passage from Villani in support of their opinion : "In the year 1331 died in Florence two just and good men, of holy life and conversation, and bountiful in almsgiving, although laymen. The one was named Barduccio, and was buried in S. Spirito, in the place of the Frati Romitani : the other, named Giovanni da Vespiagnano, was buried in S. Pietro Maggiore. And by each, God showed open miracles, in healing the sick and lunatic after divers manners ; and for each there was ordained a solemn funeral, and many images of wax set up in discharge of vows that had been made." G. Villani, lib. 10. cap. clxxxix.

<sup>1</sup> *Of Farinata and Tegghiaio.*] See Canto x. and Notes, and Canto xvi. and Notes.

<sup>2</sup> *Giacopo.*] Giacopo Rusticucci. See Canto xvi. and Notes.

<sup>3</sup> *Arrigo, Mosca.*] Of Arrigo, who is said by the commentators to have been of the noble family of the Fifanti, no mention afterwards occurs. Mosca degli Uberti, or de' Lamberti, is introduced in Canto xxviii.

For I am press'd with keen desire to hear  
If heaven's sweet cup, or poisonous drug of hell,  
Be to their lip assign'd." He answer'd straight :  
" These are yet blacker spirits. Various crimes  
Have sunk them deeper in the dark abyss.  
If thou so far descendest, thou mayst see them.  
But to the pleasant world, when thou return'st,  
Of me make mention, I entreat thee, there.  
No more I tell thee, answer thee no more."

This said, his fixed eyes he turn'd askance,  
A little eyed me, then bent down his head,  
And 'midst his blind companions with it fell.

When thus my guide : " No more his bed he  
leaves,

Ere the last angel-trumpet blow. The Power  
Adverse to these shall then in glory come,  
Each one forthwith to his sad tomb repair,  
Resume his fleshly vesture and his form,  
And hear the eternal doom re-echoing rend  
The vault." So pass'd we through that mix-  
ture foul

Of spirits and rain, with tardy steps ; mean-  
while

Touching,<sup>1</sup> though slightly, on the life to come.  
For thus I question'd : " Shall these tortures,  
Sir !

---

<sup>1</sup> *Touching.*] Conversing, though in a slight and super-  
ficial manner, on the life to come.

When the great sentence passes, be increased,  
Or mitigated, or as now severe ? ”

He then : “ Consult thy knowledge ; <sup>1</sup> that decides,

That, as each thing to more perfection grows,  
It feels more sensibly both good and pain.  
Though ne’er to true perfection may arrive  
This race accurst, yet nearer then, than now,  
They shall approach it.” Compassing that path,

Circuitous we journey’d ; and discourse,  
Much more than I relate, between us pass’d :  
Till at the point, whence the steps led below,  
Arrived, there Plutus, the great foe, we found.

## CANTO VII

### Argument.

In the present Canto, Dante describes his descent into the fourth circle, at the beginning of which he sees Plutus stationed. Here one like doom awaits the prodigal and the avaricious ; which is, to meet in direful conflict, rolling great weights against each other with mutual upbraiding. From hence Virgil takes occasion to show how vain the goods that are committed into the charge of Fortune ; and this moves our author to inquire what being that Fortune is, of whom he speaks : which question being resolved, they go

<sup>1</sup> *Consult thy knowledge.]* We are referred to the following passage in St. Augustin :—“ Cum fiet resurrectio carnis et bonorum gaudia et malorum tormenta majora erunt.”—“ At the resurrection of the flesh, both the happiness of the good and the torments of the wicked will be increased.”

down into the fifth circle, where they find the wrathful and gloomy tormented in the Stygian lake. Having made a compass round great part of this lake, they come at last to the base of a lofty tower.

“ Ah me ! O Satan ! Satan ! ” <sup>1</sup> loud ex-  
claim’d

Plutus, in accent hoarse of wild alarm :

And the kind sage, whom no event surprised,  
To comfort me thus spake : “ Let not thy fear  
Harm thee, for power in him, be sure, is none  
To hinder down this rock thy safe descent.”

Then to that swoln lip turning, “ Peace ! ” he  
cried,

“ Curst wolf ! thy fury inward on thyself  
Prey and consume thee ! Through the dark  
profound,

Not without cause, he passes. So ’tis will’d  
On high, there where the great Archangel  
pour’d

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ah me ! O Satan ! Satan ! ] Pape Satan, pape Satan,  
aleppe.*

*Pape* is said by the commentators to be the same as the Latin word *papæ*, “ strange ! ” Of *aleppe* they do not give a more satisfactory account. See the *Life of Benvenuto Cellini*, translated by Dr. Nugent, v. ii. b. 3. cap. vii. p. 113, where he mentions “ having heard the words, *Paix, paix, Satan ! allez, paix !* in the courts of justice at Paris. I recollect what Dante said, when he with his master Virgil entered the gates of hell : for Dante, and Giotto the painter, were together in France, and visited Paris with particular attention, where the court of justice may be considered as hell. Hence it is that Dante, who was likewise perfect master of the French, made use of that expression ; and I have often been surprised that it was never understood in that sense.”

Heaven's vengeance on the first adulterer proud." <sup>1</sup>

As sails, full spread and bellying with the wind,

Drop suddenly collapsed, if the mast split ;  
So to the ground down droop'd the cruel fiend.

Thus we, descending to the fourth steep ledge,

Gain'd on the dismal shore, that all the woe  
Hems in of all the universe. Ah me !

Almighty Justice ! in what store thou heap'st <sup>2</sup>  
New pains, new troubles, as I here beheld.

Wherefore doth fault of ours bring us to this ?

E'en as a billow, on Charybdis rising  
Against encounter'd billow dashing breaks ;  
Such is the dance this wretched race must lead,  
Whom more than elsewhere numerous here I found.

From one side and the other, with loud voice,  
Both roll'd on weights, by main force of their breasts,

<sup>1</sup> *The first adulterer proud.]* Satan. The word "fornication," or "adultery," "strupo," is here used for a revolt of the affections from God, according to the sense in which it is often applied in Scripture.

<sup>2</sup> *In what store thou heap'st.]* Some understand "chi stipa" to mean either "who can imagine," or "who can describe the torments," etc. I have followed Landino, whose words, though very plain, seem to have been mistaken by Lombardi : "Chi stipa, chi accumula, ed insieme raccoglie ; quasi dica, tu giustizia aduni tanti supplicii."

Then smote together, and each one forthwith  
Roll'd them back voluble, turning again ;  
Exclaiming these, "Why holdest thou so  
fast ? "

Those answering, "And why castest thou  
away ? "

So, still repeating their spiteful song,  
They to the opposite point, on either hand,  
Traversed the horrid circle ; then arrived,  
Both turn'd them round, and through the  
middle space

Conflicting met again. At sight whereof  
I, stung with grief, thus spake : " O say, my  
guide !

What race is this ? Were these, whose heads  
are shorn,

On our left hand, all separate to the church ? "

He straight replied : " In their first life,  
these all

In mind were so distorted, that they made,  
According to due measure, of their wealth  
No use. This clearly from their words collect,  
Which they howl forth, at each extremity  
Arriving of the circle, where their crime  
Contrary in kind disparts them. To the  
church

Were separate those, that with no hairy  
cowls

Are crown'd both Popes and Cardinals,<sup>1</sup> o'er  
whom

Avarice dominion absolute maintains."

I then : " 'Mid such as these some needs must  
be,

Whom I shall recognize, that with the blot  
Of these foul sins were stain'd." He answering  
thus ;

" Vain thought conceivest thou. That  
ignoble life,

Which made them vile before, now makes  
them dark,

And to all knowledge indiscernible.

For ever they shall meet in this rude shock :

These from the tomb with clenched grasp shall  
rise,

Those with close-shaven locks. That ill they  
gave,

And ill they kept, hath of the beauteous world  
Deprived, and set them at this strife, which  
needs

No labour'd phrase of mine to set it off.

<sup>1</sup> *Popes and Cardinals.*] Ariosto, having personified Avarice as a stranger and hideous monster, says of her—

Peggio facea nella Romana corte,

Che v'avea uccisi Cardinali e Papi. *Orl. Fur.* c.  
xxvi. st. 32.

Worse did she in the Court of Rome, for there  
She had slain Popes and Cardinals.

Now mayst thou see, my son ! how brief, how vain,

The goods committed into Fortune's hands,  
For which the human race keep such a coil !  
Not all the gold that is beneath the moon,  
Or ever hath been, of these toil-worn souls  
Might purchase rest for one." I thus rejoin'd :  
" My guide ! of thee this also would I learn ;  
This Fortune, that thou speak'st of, what it is,  
Whose talons grasp the blessings of the world."

He thus : " O beings blind ! what ignorance  
Besets you ! Now my judgment hear and  
mark.

He, whose transcendent wisdom passes all,  
The heavens creating, gave them ruling powers  
To guide them ; so that each part <sup>1</sup> shines to  
each,

Their light in equal distribution pour'd.  
By similar appointment he ordain'd,  
Over the world's bright images to rule,  
Superintendence of a guiding hand  
And general minister, which, at due time,  
May change the empty vantages of life  
From race to race, from one to other's blood,  
Beyond prevention of man's wisest care :  
Wherefore one nation rises into sway,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Each part.]* Each hemisphere of the heavens shines upon that hemisphere of the earth which is placed under it.

Another languishes, e'en as her will  
Decrees, from us conceal'd, as in the grass  
The serpent train. Against her naught avails  
Your utmost wisdom. She with foresight  
plans,

Judges, and carries on her reign, as theirs  
The other powers divine. Her changes know  
None intermission : by necessity  
She is made swift, so frequent come who claim  
Succession in her favours. This is she,  
So execrated e'en by those whose debt  
To her is rather praise : they wrongfully  
With blame requite her, and with evil word ;  
But she is blessed, and for that recks not :  
Amidst the other primal beings glad,  
Rolls on her sphere, and in her bliss exults.  
Now on our way pass we, to heavier woe  
Descending : for each star is falling now,  
That mounted at our entrance, and forbids  
Too long our tarrying." We the circle cross'd  
To the next steep, arriving at a well,  
That boiling pours itself down to a foss  
Sluiced from its source. Far murkier was the  
wave

Than sablest grain : and we in company  
Of the inky waters, journeying by their side,  
Enter'd, though by a different track, beneath  
Into a lake, the Stygian named, expands

The dismal stream, when it hath reach'd the foot

Of the gray wither'd cliffs. Intent I stood  
To gaze, and in the marshy sunk descried  
A miry tribe, all naked, and with looks  
Betokening rage. They with their hands alone  
Struck not, but with the head, the breast, the  
feet,

Cutting each other piecemeal with their fangs.

The good instructor spake : " Now seest thou, son !

The souls of those, whom anger overcame.  
This too for certain know, that underneath  
The water dwells a multitude, whose sighs  
Into these bubbles make the surface heave,  
As thine eye tells thee wheresoe'er it turn.  
Fix'd in the slime, they say : ' Sad once were  
we,

' In the sweet air made gladsome by the sun,  
' Carrying a foul and lazy mist within :  
' Now in these murky settling are we sad.'  
Such dolorous strain they gurgle in their  
throats,

But word distinct can utter none." Our route  
Thus compass'd we, a segment widely stretch'd  
Between the dry embankment, and the core  
Of the loath'd pool, turning meanwhile our  
eyes

Downward on those who gulp'd its muddy  
lees ;  
Nor stopp'd, till to a tower's low base we came.

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## CANTO VIII

## Argument.

A signal having been made from the tower, Phlegyas, the ferryman of the lake, speedily crosses it, and conveys Virgil and Dante to the other side. On their passage, they meet with Filippo Argenti, whose fury and torment are described. They then arrive at the city of Dis, the entrance whereto is denied, and the portals closed against them by many Demons.

My theme pursuing,<sup>1</sup> I relate, that ere  
We reach'd the lofty turret's base, our eyes  
Its height ascended, where we mark'd uphung  
Two cressets, and another saw from far  
Return the signal, so remote, that scarce  
The eye could catch its beam. I, turning  
round

<sup>1</sup> *My theme pursuing.]* It is related by some of the early commentators, that the seven preceding Cantos were found at Florence after our Poet's banishment, by some one who was searching over his papers, which were left in that city; that by this person they were taken to Dino Frescobaldi; and that he, being much delighted with them, forwarded them to the Marchese Morello Malaspina, at whose entreaty the poem was resumed. This account, though very circumstantially related, is rendered improbable by the prophecy of Ciacco in the sixth Canto, which must have been written after the events to which it alludes. The manner in which the present Canto opens furnishes no proof of the truth of the report.

To the deep source of knowledge, thus inquired :  
 “ Say what this means ; and what, that other  
 light

In answer set : what agency doth this ? ”

“ There on the filthy waters,” he replied,  
 “ E’en now what next awaits us mayst thou  
 see,

If the marsh-gender’d fog conceal it not.”

Never was arrow from the cord dismiss’d,  
 That ran its way so nimbly through the air,  
 As a small bark, that through the waves I spied  
 Toward us coming, under the sole sway  
 Of one that ferried it, who cried aloud :  
 “ Art thou arrived, fell spirit ? ”—“ Phlegyas,  
 Phlegyas,<sup>1</sup>

This time thou criest in vain,” my lord replied ;  
 “ No longer shalt thou have us, but while o’er  
 The slimy pool we pass.” As one who hears  
 Of some great wrong he hath sustain’d,  
 whereat

Inly he pines ; so Phlegyas inly pined  
 In his fierce ire. My guide, descending,  
 stepp’d

Into the skiff, and bade me enter next,  
 Close at his side ; nor, till my entrance, seem’d

---

<sup>1</sup> *Phlegyas.*] Phlegyas, who was so incensed against Apollo, for having violated his daughter Coronis, that he set fire to the temple of that deity, by whose vengeance he was cast into Tartarus. See Virg. *Aen.* lib. 6, 618.

The vessel freighted. Soon as both embark'd,  
Cutting the waves, goes on the ancient prow,  
More deeply than with others it is wont.

While we our course o'er the dead channel  
held,

One drench'd in mire before me came, and said :  
“ Who art thou, that thus comest ere thine  
hour ? ”

I answer'd : “ Though I come, I tarry not :  
But who art thou, that art become so foul ? ”

“ One, as thou seest, who mourn : ” he  
straight replied.

To which I thus : “ In mourning and in woe,  
Curst spirit ! tarry thou. I know thee well.  
E'en thus in filth disguised.” Then stretch'd  
he forth

Hands to the bark ; whereof my teacher sage  
Aware, thrusting him back : “ Away ! down  
there

To the other dogs ! ” then, with his arms my  
neck

Encircling, kiss'd my cheek, and spake : “ O  
soul,

Justly disdainful ! blest was she in whom  
Thou wast conceived. He in the world was  
one

For arrogance noted : to his memory  
No virtue lends its lustre ; even so

Here is his shadow furious. There above,  
 How many now hold themselves mighty kings,  
 Who here like swine shall wallow in the mire,  
 Leaving behind them horrible dispraise."

I then : " Master ! him fain would I behold  
 Whelm'd in these dregs, before we quit the  
 lake."

He thus : " Or ever to thy view the shore  
 Be offer'd, satisfied shall be that wish,  
 Which well deserves completion." Scarce his  
 words

Were ended, when I saw the miry tribes  
 Set on him with such violence, that yet  
 For that render I thanks to God and praise.  
 " To Filippo Argenti ! " <sup>1</sup> cried they all :  
 And on himself the moody Florentine  
 Turn'd his avenging fangs. Him here we left,  
 Nor speak I of him more. But on mine ear  
 Sudden a sound of lamentation smote,  
 Whereat mine eye unbarr'd I sent abroad.

And thus the good instructor : " Now, my  
 son

Draws near the city, that of Dis is named,  
 With its grave denizens, a mighty throng "

I thus : " The minarets already, Sir !

<sup>1</sup> *Filippo Argenti.*] Boccaccio tells us, " he was a man remarkable for the large proportions and extraordinary vigour of his bodily frame, and the extreme waywardness and irascibility of his temper." *Decam.* G. ix. N. 8.

There, certes, in the valley I descry,  
Gleaming vermillion, as if they from fire  
Had issued." He replied : " Eternal fire,  
That inward burns, shows them with ruddy  
flame

Illumed ; as in this nether hell thou seest."

We came within the fosses deep, that moat  
This region comfortless. The walls appear'd  
As they were framed of iron. We had made  
Wide circuit, ere a place we reach'd, where  
loud

The mariner cried vehement : " Go forth :  
The entrance is here." Upon the gates I spied  
More than a thousand, who of old from heaven  
Were shower'd. With ireful gestures, " Who  
is this,"

They cried, " that, without death first felt,  
goes through

The regions of the dead ? " My sapient guide  
Made sign that he for secret parley wish'd ;  
Whereat their angry scorn abating, thus  
They spake : " Come thou alone ; and let him  
go,

Who hath so hardily enter'd this realm.  
Alone return he by his witless way ;  
If well he know it, let him prove. For thee,  
Here shalt thou tarry, who through clime so  
dark

Hast been his escort." Now bethink thee,  
reader!

What cheer was mine at sound of those curst  
words.

I did believe I never should return.

" O my loved guide ! who more than seven  
times <sup>1</sup>

Security hast render'd me, and drawn  
From peril deep, whereto I stood exposed,  
Desert me not," I cried, " in this extreme.  
And, if our onward going be denied,  
Together trace we back our steps with speed."

My liege, who thither had conducted me,  
Replied : " Fear not : for of our passage none  
Hath power to disappoint us, by such high  
Authority permitted. But do thou  
Expect me here ; meanwhile, thy wearied  
spirit

Comfort, and feed with kindly hope, assured  
I will not leave thee in this lower world."

This said, departs the sire benevolent,  
And quits me. Hesitating I remain

<sup>1</sup> Seven times.] The commentators, says Venturi, perplex themselves with the inquiry what seven perils these were from which Dante had been delivered by Virgil. Reckoning the beasts in the first Canto as one of them, and adding Charon, Minos, Cerberus, Plutus, Phlegyas, and Filippo Argenti, as so many others, we shall have the number ; and if this be not satisfactory, we may suppose a determinate to have been put for an indeterminate number.

At war, 'twixt will and will not, in my thoughts.

I could not hear what terms he offer'd them,  
But they conferr'd not long, for all at once  
Pellmell<sup>1</sup> rush'd back within. Closed were  
the gates,

By those our adversaries, on the breast  
Of my liege lord : excluded, he return'd  
To me with tardy steps. Upon the ground  
His eyes were bent, and from his brow erased  
All confidence, while thus in sighs he spake :  
“ Who hath denied me these abodes of woe ? ”  
Then thus to me : “ That I am anger'd, think  
No ground of terror : in this trial I  
Shall vanquish, use what arts they may within  
For hindrance. This their insolence, not new,<sup>2</sup>  
Erewhile at gate less secret they display'd,  
Which still is without bolt ; upon its arch  
Thou saw'st the deadly scroll : and even now,  
On this side of its entrance, down the steep,  
Passing the circles, unescorted, comes  
One whose strong might can open us this land.”

<sup>1</sup> *Pellmell.*] A pruova. “ Certatim.” “ A l'envi.” I had before translated “ To trial ; ” and have to thank Mr. Carlyle for detecting the error.

<sup>2</sup> *This their insolence, not new.*] Virgil assures our Poet, that these evil spirits had formerly shown the same insolence when our Saviour descended into hell. They attempted to prevent him from entering at the gate, over which Dante had read the fatal inscription. “ That gate which,” says the Roman poet, “ an angel had just passed, by whose aid we shall overcome this opposition, and gain admittance into the city.”

## CANTO IX

## Argument.

After some hindrances, and having seen the hellish furies and other monsters, the Poet, by the help of an angel, enters the city of Dis, wherein he discovers that the heretics are punished in tombs burning with intense fire: and he, together with Virgil, passes onwards between the sepulchres and the walls of the city.

THE hue,<sup>1</sup> which coward dread on my pale cheeks

Imprinted when I saw my guide turn back,  
Chased that from his which newly they had worn,

And inwardly restrain'd it. He, as one  
Who listens, stood attentive: for his eye  
Not far could lead him through the sable air,  
And the thick-gathering cloud. "It yet behoves

We win this fight;" thus he began: "if not,  
Such aid to us is offer'd.—Oh! how long  
Me seems it, ere the promised help arrive."

I noted, how the sequel of his words  
Cloaked their beginning; for the last he spake  
Agreed not with the first. But not the less  
My fear was at his saying; sith I drew  
To import worse, perchance, than that he held,

<sup>1</sup> *The hue.*] Virgil, perceiving that Dante was pale with fear, restrained those outward tokens of displeasure which his own countenance had betrayed.

His mutilated speech. “ Doth ever any  
Into this rueful concave’s extreme depth  
Descend, out of the first degree, whose pain  
Is deprivation merely of sweet hope ? ”

Thus I inquiring. “ Rarely,” he replied,  
“ It chances, that among us any makes  
This journey, which I wend. Erewhile, ’tis  
true,

Once came I here beneath, conjured by fell  
Erictho,<sup>1</sup> sorceress, who compell’d the shades  
Back to their bodies. No long space my flesh  
Was naked of me,<sup>2</sup> when within these walls  
She made me enter, to draw forth a spirit  
From out of Judas’ circle. Lowest place  
Is that of all, obscurest, and removed  
Farthest from heaven’s all-circling orb. The  
road

Full well I know : thou therefore rest secure.  
That lake, the noisome stench exhaling, round

<sup>1</sup> *Eričho.*] Eričho, a Thessalian sorceress, according to Lucan, *Pharsal.* lib. 6, was employed by Sextus, son of Pompey the Great, to conjure up a spirit, who should inform him of the issue of the civil wars between his father and Caesar.

<sup>2</sup> ——————*No long space my flesh  
Was naked of me.*]

Dante appears to have fallen into an anachronism. Virgil’s death did not happen till long after this period. But Lombardi shows, in opposition to the other commentators, that the anachronism is only apparent. Eričho might well have survived the battle of Pharsalia long enough to be employed in her magical practices at the time of Virgil’s decease.

The city of grief encompasses, which now  
We may not enter without rage.” Yet more  
He added : but I hold it not in mind,  
For that mine eye toward the lofty tower  
Had drawn me wholly, to its burning top ;  
Where, in an instant, I beheld uprisen  
At once three hellish furies stain’d with blood :  
In limb and motion feminine they seem’d ;  
Around them greenest hydras twisting roll’d  
Their volumes ; adders and cerastes crept  
Instead of hair, and their fierce temples bound.

He, knowing well the miserable hags  
Who tend the queen of endless woe, thus spake :  
“ Mark thou each dire Erynnis. To the left,  
This is Megæra ; on the right hand, she  
Who wails, Alecto ; and Tisiphone  
I’ th’ midst.” This said, in silence he remain’d.  
Their breast they each one clawing tore ;  
themselves  
Smote with their palms, and such thrill clamour  
raised

That to the bard I clung, suspicion bound.  
“ Hasten Medusa : so to adamant  
Him shall we change ; ” all looking down  
exclaim’d :  
“ E’en when by Theseus’ might assail’d, we took  
No ill revenge.” “ Turn thyself round, and  
keep

Thy countenance hid ; for if the Gorgon dire  
Be shown, and thou shouldst view it, thy  
return

Upwards would be for ever lost." This said,  
Himself, my gentle master, turn'd me round ;  
Nor trusted he my hands, but with his own  
He also hid me. Ye of intellect  
Sound and entire, mark well the lore <sup>1</sup> con-  
ceal'd

Under close texture of the mystic strain.

And now there came o'er the perturbed  
waves

Loud-crashing, terrible, a sound that made  
Either shore tremble, as if of a wind  
Impetuous, from conflicting vapours sprung,  
That 'gainst some forest driving all his might,  
Plucks off the branches, beats them down, and  
hurls

Afar ; <sup>2</sup> then, onward passing, proudly sweeps

---

<sup>1</sup> *The lore.*] The Poet probably intends to call the reader's attention to the allegorical and mystic sense of the present Canto, and not, as Venturi supposes, to that of the whole work. Landino supposes this hidden meaning to be, that in the case of those vices which proceed from incontinence and intemperance, reason, which is figured under the person of Virgil, with the ordinary grace of God, may be a sufficient safeguard ; but that in the instance of more heinous crimes, such as those we shall hereafter see punished, a special grace, represented by the angel, is requisite for our defence.

<sup>2</sup> *Afar.*] "Porta i fiori," "carries away the blossoms," is the common reading. "Porta fuori," which is the right reading, adopted by Lombardi in his edition from the

His whirlwind rage, while beasts and shepherds  
fly.

Mine eyes he loosed, and spake : “ And now  
direct

Thy visual nerve along that ancient foam,  
There, thickest where the smoke ascends.”

As frogs

Before their foe the serpent, through the wave  
Ply swiftly all, till at the ground each one  
Lies on a heap ; more than a thousand spirits  
Destroy’d, so saw I fleeing before one  
Who pass’d with unwet feet the Stygian sound.  
He, from his face removing the gross air,  
Oft his left hand forth stretch’d, and seem’d  
alone

By that annoyance wearied. I perceived  
That he was sent from heaven ; and to my guide  
Turn’d me, who signal made, that I should  
stand

Quiet, and bend to him. Ah me ! how full  
Of noble anger seem’d he. To the gate  
He came, and with his wand<sup>1</sup> touch’d it,  
whereat

Nidobeatina, for which he claims it exclusively, I had also  
seen in Landino’s edition of 1484, and adopted from thence,  
long before it was my chance to meet with Lombardi.

<sup>1</sup> *With his wand.]*

She with her rod did softly smite the raile,  
Which straight flew ope.

Open without impediment it flew.

"Outcasts of heaven ! O abject race, and  
scorn'd ! "

Began he, on the horrid grunsel standing,  
"Whence doth this wild excess of insolence  
Lodge in you ? wherefore kick you 'gainst that  
will

Ne'er frustrate of its end, and which so oft  
Hath laid on you enforcement of your  
pangs ?

What profits, at the fates to butt the horn ?  
Your Cerberus,<sup>1</sup> if ye remember, hence  
Bears still, peel'd of their hair, his throat and  
maw."

This said, he turn'd back o'er the filthy  
way,

And syllable to us spake none ; but wore  
The semblance of a man by other care  
Beset, and keenly prest, than thought of him  
Who in his presence stands. Then we our  
steps

Towards that territory moved, secure

<sup>1</sup> Your Cerberus.] Cerberus is feigned to have been dragged by Hercules, bound with a threefold chain, of which, says the angel, he still bears the marks. Lombardi blames the other interpreters for having supposed that the angel attributes this exploit to Hercules, a fabulous hero, rather than to our Saviour. It would seem as if the good father had forgotten that Cerberus is himself no less a creature of the imagination than the hero who encountered him.

After the hallow'd words. We, unopposed,  
 There enter'd ; and, my mind eager to learn  
 What state a fortress like to that might hold,  
 I, soon as enter'd, throw mine eye around,  
 And see, on every part, wide-stretching space,  
 Replete with bitter pain and torment ill.

As where Rhone stagnates on the plains of  
 Arles,<sup>1</sup>

Or as at Pola,<sup>2</sup> near Quarnaro's gulf,  
 That closes Italy and laves her bounds,  
 The place is all thick spread with sepulchres ;  
 So was it here, save what in horror here  
 Excell'd : for 'midst the graves were scatter'd  
 flames

Wherewith intensely all throughout they  
 burn'd,

That iron for no craft there hotter needs.

Their lids all hung suspended ; and beneath,  
 From them forth issued lamentable moans,  
 Such as the sad and tortured well might raise.

I thus : " Master ! say who are these, interr'd  
 Within these vaults, of whom distinct we hear  
 The dolorous sighs." He answer thus return'd :  
 " The arch-heretics are here, accompanied  
 By every sect their followers ; and much more

<sup>1</sup> *The plains of Arles.]* In Provence.

<sup>2</sup> *At Pola.]* A city of Istria, situated near the gulf of Quarnaro, in the Adriatic Sea.

Than thou believest, the tombs are freighted :  
like

With like is buried ; and the monuments  
Are different in degrees of heat.” This said,  
He to the right hand turning, on we pass’d  
Betwixt the afflicted and the ramparts high.

---

## CANTO X

### Argument.

Dante, having obtained permission from his guide, holds discourse with Farinata degli Uberti and Cavalcante Cavalcanti, who lie in their fiery tombs, that are yet open, and not to be closed up till after the last judgment. ✓ Farinata predicts the Poet’s exile from Florence ; and shows him that the condemned have knowledge of future things, but are ignorant of what is at present passing, unless it be revealed by some newcomer from earth.

Now by a secret pathway we proceed,  
Between the walls, that hem the region round,  
And the tormented souls : my master first,  
I close behind his steps. “ Virtue supreme ! ”  
I thus began : “ who through these ample orbs  
In circuit lead’st me, even as thou will’st ;  
Speak thou, and satisfy my wish. May those,  
Who lie within these sepulchres be seen ?  
Already all the lids are raised, and none  
O’er them keeps watch.” He thus in answer  
spake :

“ They shall be closed all, what-time they here

From Josaphat<sup>1</sup> returned shall come, and bring

Their bodies, which above they now have left.

The cemetery on this part obtain,

With Epicurus, all his followers,

Who with the body make the spirit die.

Here therefore satisfaction shall be soon,

Both to the question ask'd, and to the wish<sup>2</sup>

Which thou conceal'st in silence." I replied :

"I keep not, guide beloved ! from thee my heart

Secreted, but to shun vain length of words ;

A lesson erewhile taught me by thyself."

" O Tuscan ! thou, who through the city of fire

Alive art passing, so discreet of speech :

Here, please thee, stay awhile. Thy utterance

Declares the place of thy nativity

To be that noble land, with which perchance

<sup>1</sup> *Josaphat.*] It seems to have been a common opinion among the Jews, as well as among many Christians, that the general judgment will be held in the valley of Josaphat, or Jehoshaphat : " I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people, and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." Joel, iii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *The wish.*] The wish, that Dante had not expressed, was to see and converse with the followers of Epicurus ; among whom, we shall see, were Farinata degli Uberti and Cavalcante Cavalcanti.

I too severely dealt." Sudden that sound  
 Forth issued from a vault, whereat, in fear,  
 I somewhat closer to my leader's side  
 Approaching, he thus spake : " What dost  
 thou ? Turn :

Lo ! Farinata <sup>1</sup> there, who hath himself  
 Uplifted : from his girdle upwards, all  
 Exposed, behold him." On his face was mine  
 Already fix'd : his breast and forehead there  
 Erecting, seem'd as in high scorn he held  
 E'en hell. Between the sepulchres, to him  
 My guide thrust me, with fearless hands and  
 prompt ;

This warning added : " See thy words be clear."

He, soon as I there stood at the tomb's foot,  
 Eyed me a space ; then in disdainful mood  
 Address'd me : " Say what ancestors were  
 thine."

I, willing to obey him, straight reveal'd  
 The whole, nor kept back aught : whence he,  
 his brow  
 Somewhat uplifting, cried : " Fiercely were  
 they  
 Adverse to me, my party, and the blood

<sup>1</sup> *Farinata.*] Farinata degli Uberti, a noble Florentine, was the leader of the Ghibelline faction, when they obtained a signal victory over the Guelfi at Montaperto, near the river Arbia. Macchiavelli calls him "a man of exalted soul, and great military talents." *Hist. of Flor.* b. 2.

From whence I sprang : twice,<sup>1</sup> therefore, I  
abroad

Scatter'd them." "Though driven out, yet  
they each time

From all parts," answered I, "return'd ; an  
art

Which yours have shown they are not skill'd  
to learn."

Then, peering forth from the unclosed jaw,  
Rose from his side a shade,<sup>2</sup> high as the chin,  
Leaning, methought, upon its knees upraised.  
It look'd around, as eager to explore  
If there were other with me ; but perceiving  
That fond imagination quench'd, with tears  
Thus spake : " If thou through this blind prison  
go'st,

Led by thy lofty genius and profound,  
Where is my son ? <sup>3</sup> and wherefore not with  
thee ? "

<sup>1</sup> *Twice.*] The first time in 1248, when they were driven out by Frederick the Second. See G. Villani, lib. 6 c. xxxiv. ; and the second time in 1260. See Note to v. 83.

<sup>2</sup> *A shade.*] The spirit of Cavalcante Cavalcanti, a noble Florentine, of the Guelph party.

<sup>3</sup> *My son.*] Guido, the son of Cavalcante Cavalcanti ; " he whom I call the first of my friends," says Dante in his *Vita Nuova*, where the commencement of their friendship is related. From the character given of him by contemporary writers, his temper was well formed to assimilate with that of our Poet. " He was," according to G. Villani, lib. 8. c. xli., " of a philosophical and elegant mind, if he

I straight replied : “ Not of myself I come ;  
By him, who there expects me, through this  
clime

Conducted, whom perchance Guido thy son  
Had in contempt.”<sup>1</sup> Already had his words  
And mode of punishment read me his name,  
Whence I so fully answered. He at once  
Exclaim’d, up starting, “ How ! said’st thou,  
he *had* ?

No longer lives he ? Strikes not on his eye  
The blessed daylight ? ” Then, of some delay  
I made ere my reply, aware, down fell  
Supine, nor after forth appear’d he more.

Meanwhile the other, great of soul, near  
whom

I yet was station’d, changed not countenance  
stern,  
Nor moved the neck, nor bent his ribbed side.  
“ And if,” continuing the first discourse,  
“ They in this art,” he cried, “ small skill have  
shown ;

---

had not been too delicate and fastidious.” He died, either in exile at Serrazana, or soon after his return to Florence, December, 1300, during the spring of which year the action of this poem is supposed to be passing.

<sup>1</sup> ————— *Guido thy son*

*Had in contempt.]* Guido Cavalcanti, being more given to philosophy than poetry, was perhaps no great admirer of Virgil. Some poetical compositions by Guido are, however, still extant ; and his reputation for skill in the art was such as to eclipse that of his predecessor and namesake, Guido Guinicelli.

That doth torment me more e'en than this bed.  
 But not yet fifty times <sup>1</sup> shall be relumed  
 Her aspect, who reigns here queen of this realm,<sup>2</sup>  
 Ere thou shalt know the full weight of that art.  
 So to the pleasant world mayst thou return,  
 As thou shalt tell me why, in all their laws,  
 Against my kin this people is so fell.

“ The slaughter <sup>3</sup> and great havoc,” I replied,  
 “ That colour’d Arbia’s flood with crimson  
 stain—

To these impute, that in our hallow’d dome  
 Such orisons <sup>4</sup> ascend.” Sighing he shook  
 The head, then thus resumed : “ In that affray  
 I stood not singly, nor, without just cause,  
 Assuredly, should with the rest have stirr’d ;  
 But singly there I stood,<sup>5</sup> when, by consent

<sup>1</sup> *Not yet fifty times.]* “ Not fifty months shall be passed, before thou shalt learn, by woeful experience, the difficulty of returning from banishment to thy native city.”

<sup>2</sup> *Queen of this realm.]* The moon, one of whose titles in heathen mythology, was Proserpine, queen of the shades below.

<sup>3</sup> *The slaughter.]* “ By means of Farinata degli Uberti, the Guelfi were conquered by the army of king Manfredi, near the river Arbia, with so great a slaughter, that those who escaped from that defeat took refuge, not in Florence, which city they considered as lost to them, but in Lucca.”

<sup>4</sup> *Such orisons.]* This appears to allude to certain prayers which were offered up in the churches of Florence, for deliverance from the hostile attempts of the Uberti : or, it may be, that the public councils being held in churches, the speeches delivered in them against the Uberti are termed “ orisons,” or prayers.

<sup>5</sup> *Singly there I stood.]* Guido Novello assembled a

Of all, Florence had to the ground been razed,  
The one who openly forbade the deed."

" So may thy lineage find at last repose,"  
I thus adjured him, " as thou solve this knot,  
Which now involves my mind. If right I hear,  
Ye seem to view beforehand that which time  
Leads with him, of the present uninform'd."

" We view, as one who hath an evil sight,"  
He answer'd, " plainly, objects far remote ;  
So much of his large splendour yet imparts  
The Almighty Ruler : but when they approach,  
Or actually exist, our intellect  
Then wholly fails ; nor of your human state,  
Except what others bring us, know we aught.  
Hence therefore mayst thou understand, that  
all

Our knowledge in that instant shall expire,  
When on futurity the portals close."

Then conscious of my fault,<sup>1</sup> and by remorse

---

council of the Ghibellini at Empoli ; where it was agreed by all, that, in order to maintain the ascendancy of the Ghibelline party in Tuscany, it was necessary to destroy Florence, which could serve only (the people of that city being Guelfi) to enable the party attached to the church to recover its strength. This cruel sentence, passed upon so noble a city, met with no opposition from any of its citizens or friends, except Farinata degli Uberti, who openly and without reserve forbade the measure ; affirming, that he had endured so many hardships, and encountered so many dangers, with no other view than that of being able to pass his days in his own country. Macchialelli, *Hist. of Flor.* b. 2.

<sup>1</sup> *My fault.]* Dante felt remorse for not having returned

Smitten, I added thus : “ Now shalt thou say  
 To him there fallen, that his offspring still  
 Is to the living join’d ; and bid him know,  
 That if from answer, silent, I abstain’d,  
 ’Twas that my thought was occupied, intent  
 Upon that error, which thy help hath solved.”

But now my master summoning me back  
 I heard, and with more eager haste besought  
 The spirit to inform me, who with him  
 Partook his lot. He answered thus return’d :  
 “ More than a thousand with me here are laid.  
 Within is Frederick,<sup>1</sup> second of that name,  
 And the Lord Cardinal ; <sup>2</sup> and of the rest  
 I speak not.” He, this said, from sight withdrew.

But I my steps toward the ancient bard  
 Reverting, ruminated on the words  
 Betokening me such ill. Onward he moved,  
 And thus, in going, question’d : “ Whence the  
 amaze

an immediate answer to the inquiry of Cavalcante, from which delay he was led to believe that his son Guido was no longer living.

<sup>1</sup> *Frederick.*] The Emperor Frederick the Second, who died in 1250.

<sup>2</sup> *The Lord Cardinal.*] Ottaviano Ubaldini, a Florentine, made cardinal in 1245, and deceased about 1273. On account of his great influence, he was generally known by the appellation of “ the Cardinal.” It is reported of him, that he declared, if there were any such thing as a human soul, he had lost his for the Ghibellini.

That holds thy senseſ wrapt ? ” I satisfied  
The inquiry, and the sage enjoin’d me straight :  
“ Let thy safe memory store what thou hast  
heard

To thee importing harm ; and note thou this,”  
With his raised finger bidding me take heed,  
“ When thou shalt stand before her gracious  
beam,<sup>1</sup>

Whose bright eye all surveys, she of thy life  
The future tenour will to thee unfold.”

Forthwith he to the left hand turn’d his feet :  
We left the wall, and towards the middle space  
Went by a path that to a valley strikes,  
Which e’en thus high exhaled its noisome  
steam.

## CANTO XI

### Argument.

Dante arrives at the verge of a rocky precipice which encloses the seventh circle, where he sees the sepulchre of Anastasius the Heretic ; behind the lid of which pausing a little, to make himself capable by degrees of enduring the fetid smell that steamed upward from the abyss, he is instructed by Virgil concerning the manner in which the three following circles are disposed, and what description of sinners is punished in each. He then inquires the reason why the carnal, the gluttonous, the avaricious and prodigal, the wrathful and gloomy, suffer not their punishments within

<sup>1</sup> *Her gracious beam.] Beatrice.*

the city of Dis. He next asks how the crime of usury is an offence against God, and at length the two Poets go towards the place from whence a passage leads down to the seventh circle.

UPON the utmost verge of a high bank,  
By craggy rocks environ'd round, we came,  
Where woes beneath, more cruel yet, were  
stow'd :

And here, to shun the horrible excess  
Of fetid exhalation upward cast  
From the profound abyss, behind the lid  
Of a great monument we stood retired,  
Whereon this scroll I mark'd : "I have in  
charge

Pope Anastasius,<sup>1</sup> whom Photinus drew  
From the right path."—"Ere our descent, behoves

We make delay, that somewhat first the sense,  
To the dire breath accustom'd, afterward  
Regard it not." My master thus ; to whom  
Answering I spake : "Some compensation  
find,

That the time pass not wholly lost." He then :  
"Lo ! how my thoughts e'en to thy wishes tend.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Pope Anastasius.*] The commentators are not agreed concerning the person who is here mentioned as a follower of the heretical Photinus. By some he is supposed to have been Anastasius the Second ; by others, the Fourth of that name ; while a third set, jealous of the integrity of the papal faith, contend that our Poet has confounded him with Anastasius I., Emperor of the East.

My son !<sup>1</sup> within these rocks," he thus began,  
 " Are three close circles in gradation placed  
 As these which now thou leavest. Each one is  
 full

Of spirits accurst ; but that the sight alone  
 Hereafter may suffice thee, listen how  
 And for what cause in durance they abide.

" Of all malicious act abhor'd in heaven,  
 The end is injury ; and all such end  
 Either by force or fraud works other's woe.  
 But fraud, because of man peculiar evil,  
 To God is more displeasing ; and beneath,  
 The fraudulent are therefore doomed to endure  
 Severer pang. The violent occupy  
 All the first circle ; and because, to force,  
 Three persons are obnoxious in three rounds,  
 Each within other separate, is it framed.  
 To God, his neighbour, and himself, by man  
 Force may be offer'd ; to himself I say,  
 And his possessions, as thou soon shalt hear  
 At full. Death, violent death, and painful  
 wounds

Upon his neighbour he inflicts ; and wastes,  
 By devastation, pillage, and the flames,  
 His substance. Slayers, and each one that  
 smites

---

<sup>1</sup> *My son.]* The remainder of the present Canto may be considered as a syllabus of the whole of this part of the poem.

In malice, plunderers, and all robbers, hence  
 The torment undergo of the first round,  
 In different herds. Man can do violence  
 To himself and his own blessings : and for this,  
 He, in the second round must aye deplore  
 With unavailing penitence his crime,  
 Whoe'er deprives himself of life and light,  
 In reckless lavishment his talent wastes,  
 And sorrows<sup>1</sup> there where he should dwell in  
 joy.

To God may force be offer'd, in the heart  
 Denying and blaspheming his high power,  
 And Nature with her kindly law contemning.  
 And thence the inmost round marks with its  
 seal

Sodom, and Cahors,<sup>2</sup> and all such as speak  
 Contemptuously of the Godhead in their hearts.

“ Fraud, that in every conscience leaves a  
 sting,

May be by man employ'd on one, whose trust  
 He wins, or on another who withholds  
 Strict confidence. Seems as the latter way

<sup>1</sup> *And sorrows.*] This fine moral, that not to enjoy our being is to be ungrateful to the Author of it, is well expressed in Spenser, *F. Q. b. 4. c. viii. st. 15.* :

For he whose daies in wilful woe are worne,  
 The grace of his Creator doth despise,  
 That will not use his gifts for thankless nigardise.

<sup>2</sup> *Cahors.*] A city of Guienne, much frequented by usurers.

Broke but the bond of love which Nature makes.

Whence in the second circle have their nest,  
Dissimulation, witchcraft, flatteries,  
Theft, falsehood, simony, all who seduce  
To lust, or set their honesty at pawn,  
With such vile scum as these. The other way  
Forgets both Nature's general love, and that  
Which thereto added afterward gives birth  
To special faith. Whence in the lesser circle,  
Point of the universe, dread seat of Dis,  
The traitor is eternally consumed."

I thus : " Instructor, clearly thy discourse  
Proceeds, distinguishing the hideous chasm  
And its inhabitants with skill exact.  
But tell me this : they of the dull, fat pool,  
Whom the rain beats, or whom the tempest  
drives,  
Or who with tongues so fierce conflicting meet,  
Wherefore within the city fire-illumed  
Are not these punish'd, if God's wrath be on  
them?

And if it be not, wherefore in such guise  
Are they condemn'd ? " He answer thus  
return'd :

" Wherefore in dotage wanders thus thy mind,  
Not so accustom'd ? or what other thoughts  
Possess it ? Dwell not in thy memory

The words, wherein thy ethic page<sup>1</sup> describes  
 Three dispositions adverse to Heaven's will,  
 Incontinence, malice, and mad brutishness,  
 And how incontinence the least offends  
 God, and least guilt incurs ? If well thou  
 note

This judgment, and remember who they are,  
 Without these walls to vain repentance doom'd,  
 Thou shalt discern why they apart are placed  
 From these fell spirits, and less wreakful pours  
 Justice divine on them its vengeance down."

" O sun ! who healest all imperfect sight,  
 Thou so content'st me, when thou solvest my  
 doubt,  
 That ignorance not less than knowledge charms.  
 Yet somewhat turn thee back," I in these  
 words

Continued, " where thou said'st that usury  
 Offends celestial Goodness ; and this knot  
 Perplex'd unravel." He thus made reply :  
 " Philosophy, to an attentive ear,  
 Clearly points out, not in one part alone,

<sup>1</sup> Thy ethic page.] He refers to Aristotle's *Ethics* :  
 "Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα λεκτέον, ἀλλην ποιησαμένους ἀρχὴν ὅτι τῶν  
 περὶ τὰ ίδη φευκτῶν τρία ἔστιν εῖδη, κακία, ἀκρασία, θηριότης"  
*Ethic. Nicomach.* lib. 7. cap. i. "In the next place,  
 entering on another division of the subject, let it be  
 defined, that respecting morals there are three sorts of  
 things to be avoided, malice, incontinence, and brutish  
 ness."

How imitative Nature takes her course  
 From the celestial mind, and from its art ;  
 And where her laws <sup>1</sup> the Stagyrite unfolds,  
 Not many leaves scann'd o'er observing well  
 Thou shalt discover, that your art on her  
 Obsequious follows, as the learner treads  
 In his instructor's step ; so that your art  
 Deserves the name of second in descent  
 From God. These two if thou recall to mind  
 Creation's holy book,<sup>2</sup> from the beginning  
 Were the right source of life and excellence  
 To human kind. But in another path  
 The usurer walks ; and Nature in herself  
 And in her follower thus he sets at nought,  
 Placing elsewhere his hope.<sup>3</sup> But follow now  
 My steps on forward journey bent ; for now  
 The Pisces play with undulating glance  
 Along the horizon, and the Wain <sup>4</sup> lies all

---

<sup>1</sup> *Her laws.*] Aristotle's *Physics*.

<sup>2</sup> *Creation's holy book.]* Genesis, ii. 15 : "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it." And, Genesis, iii. 19 : "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

<sup>3</sup> *Placing elsewhere his hope.]* The usurer, trusting in the produce of his wealth lent out on usury, despises nature directly, because he does not avail himself of her means for maintaining or enriching himself ; and indirectly, because he does not avail himself of the means which art, the follower and imitator of nature, would afford him for the same purposes.

<sup>4</sup> *The Wain.]* The constellation Bootes, or Charles's Wain.

O'er the north-west ; and onward there a space  
Is our steep passage down the rocky height."

---

## CANTO XII

### Argument.

Descending by a very rugged way into the seventh circle, where the violent are punished, Dante and his leader find it guarded by the Minotaur ; whose fury being pacified by Virgil, they step downwards from crag to crag ; till, drawing near the bottom, they descry a river of blood, wherein are tormented such as have committed violence against their neighbour. At these, when they strive to emerge from the blood, a troop of Centaurs, running along the side of the river, aim their arrows ; and three of their band opposing our travellers at the foot of the steep, Virgil prevails so far, that one consents to carry them both across the stream ; and on their passage, Dante is informed by him of the course of the river, and of those that are punished therein.

THE place, where to descend the precipice  
We came, was rough as Alp ; and on its verge  
Such object lay, as every eye would shun.

As is that ruin, which Adice's stream <sup>1</sup>  
On this side Trento struck, shouldering the  
wave,

Or loosed by earthquake or for lack of prop ;  
For from the mountain's summit, whence it  
moved

To the low level, so the headlong rock

---

<sup>1</sup> *Adice's stream.*] After a great deal having been said on the subject, it still appears very uncertain at what part of the river this fall of the mountain happened.

Is shiver'd, that some passage it might give  
 To him who from above would pass ; e'en such  
 Into the chasm was that descent : and there  
 At point of the disparted ridge lay stretched  
 The infamy of Crete,<sup>1</sup> detested brood  
 Of the feigned heifer : <sup>2</sup> and at sight of us  
 It gnaw'd itself, as one with rage distract.  
 To him my guide exclaim'd ; " Perchance thou  
 deem'st

The king of Athens<sup>3</sup> here, who, in the world  
 Above, thy death contrived. Monster !  
 avaunt !

He comes not tutor'd by thy sister's art,<sup>4</sup>  
 But to behold your torments is he come."

Like to a bull, that with impetuous spring  
 Darts, at the moment when the fatal blow  
 Hath struck him, but unable to proceed  
 Plunges on either side ; so saw I plunge  
 The Minotaur ; whereat the sage exclaim'd :  
 " Run to the passage ! while he storms, 'tis well  
 That thou descend." Thus down our road we  
 took

Through those dilapidated crags that oft

<sup>1</sup> *The infamy of Crete.]* The Minotaur.

<sup>2</sup> *The feign'd heifer.]* Pasiphaë.

<sup>3</sup> *The king of Athens.)* Theseus, who was enabled by the instruction of Ariadne, the sister of the Minotaur, to destroy that monster.

<sup>4</sup> *Thy sister's art.]* Ariadne.

Moved underneath my feet, to weight like  
theirs

Unused. I pondering went, and thus he spake :  
“ Perhaps thy thoughts are of this ruin’d steep,  
Guarded by the brute violence, which I  
Have vanquish’d now. Know then, that when  
I erst

Hither descended to the neither hell,  
This rock was not yet fallen. But past doubt,  
(If well I mark) not long ere He arrived,<sup>1</sup>  
Who carried off from Dis the mighty spoil  
Of the highest circle, then through all its  
bounds

Such trembling seized the deep concave and  
foul,

I thought the universe was thrill’d with love,  
Whereby, there are who deem, the world hath  
oft

Been into chaos turn’d : <sup>2</sup> and in that point,  
Here, and elsewhere, that old rock toppled  
down.

But fix thine eyes beneath : the river of blood  
Approaches, in the which all those are steep’d,

<sup>1</sup> *He arrived.*] Our Saviour, who, according to Dante, when he ascended from hell, carried with him the souls of the Patriarchs, and of other just men, out of the first circle. See Canto iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Been into chaos turn’d.*] This opinion is attributed to Empedocles.

Who have by violence injured." O blind lust !  
 O foolish wrath ! who so dost goad us on  
 In the brief life, and in the eternal then  
 Thus miserably o'erwhelm us. I beheld  
 An ample foss, that in a bow was bent,  
 As circling all the plain ; for so my guide  
 Had told. Between it and the rampart's base,  
 On trail ran Centaurs, with keen arrows arm'd,  
 As to the chase they on the earth were wont.

At seeing us descend they each one stood ;  
 And issuing from the troop, three sped with  
 bows

And missile weapons chosen first ; of whom  
 One cried from far : " Say, to what pain ye  
 come

Condemn'd, who down this steep have journey'd.

Speak

From whence ye stand, or else the bow I draw."

To whom my guide : " Our answer shall be  
 made

To Chiron, there, when nearer him we come,  
 Ill was thy mind, thus ever quick and rash."  
 Then me he touch'd, and spake : " Nessus is  
 this,

Who for the fair Deianira died,  
 And wrought himself revenge<sup>1</sup> for his own fate.

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<sup>1</sup> *And wrought himself revenge.]* Nessus, when dying by the hand of Hercules, charged Deianira to preserve the

He in the midst, that on his breast looks down,  
Is the great Chiron who Achilles nursed ;  
That other, Pholus, prone to wrath." Around  
The foss these go by thousands, aiming shafts  
At whatsoever spirit dares emerge  
From out the blood, more than his guilt allows.

We to those beasts, that rapid strode along,  
Drew near ; when Chiron took an arrow forth,  
And with the notch push'd back his shaggy  
beard

To the cheek-bone, then, his great mouth to  
view

Exposing, to his fellows thus exclaimed :  
" Are ye aware, that he who comes behind  
Moves what he touches ? The feet of the dead  
Are not so wont." My trusty guide, who now  
Stood near his breast, where the two natures  
join,

Thus made reply : " He is indeed alive,  
And solitary so must needs by me  
Be shown the gloomy vale, thereto induced  
By strict necessity, not by delight.  
She left her joyful harpings in the sky,  
Who this new office to my care consigned.

---

gore from his wound ; for that if the affections of Hercules should at any time be estranged from her, it would act as a charm, and recall them. Deianira had occasion to try the experiment ; and the venom acting, as Nessus had intended, caused Hercules to expire in torments. See the *Trachiniae* of Sophocles.

He is no robber, no dark spirit I.  
 But by that virtue, which empowers my step  
 To tread so wild a path, grant us, I pray,  
 One of thy band, whom we may trust secure,  
 Who to the ford may lead us, and convey  
 Across, him mounted on his back ; for he  
 Is not a spirit that may walk the air."

Then on his right breast turning, Chiron thus  
 To Nessus spake : " Return, and be their  
 guide.

And if ye chance to cross another troop,  
 Command them keep aloof." Onward we  
 moved,

The faithful escort by our side, along  
 The border of the crimson-seething flood,  
 Whence, from those steep'd within, loud  
 shrieks arose.

Some there I mark'd, as high as to their brow  
 Immersed, of whom the mighty Centaur thus :  
 " These are the souls of tyrants, who were given  
 To blood and rapine. Here they wail aloud  
 Their merciless wrongs. Here Alexander dwells  
 And Dionysius fell, who many a year  
 Of woe wrought for fair Sicily. That brow,  
 Whereon the hair so jetty clustering hangs,  
 Is Azzolino ; <sup>1</sup> that with flaxen locks

---

<sup>1</sup> *Azzolino.*] Azzolino, or Ezzolino di Romano, a most cruel tyrant in the Marca Trivigiana, Lord of Padua, Vicen-

Obizzo<sup>1</sup> of Este, in the world destroy'd  
 By his foul step-son." To the bard revered  
 I turn'd me round, and thus he spake ; " Let  
 him

Be to thee now first leader, me but next  
 To him in rank." Then farther on a space  
 The Centaur paused, near some, who at the  
 throat

Were extant from the wave ; and, showing us  
 A spirit by itself apart retired,  
 Exclaim'd : " He<sup>2</sup> in God's bosom smote the  
 heart,

za, Verona, and Brescia, who died in 1260. His atrocities form the subject of a Latin tragedy, called *Eccerinis*, by Albertino Mussato, of Padua, the contemporary of Dante, and the most elegant writer of Latin verse of that age.

<sup>1</sup> *Obizzo of Este.*] Marquis of Ferrara and of the Marca d'Ancona was murdered by his own son (whom, for that most unnatural act, Dante calls his step-son) for the sake of the treasures which his rapacity had amassed. See Ariosto, *Orl. Fur.* c. iii. st. 32. He died in 1293, according to Gibbon, *Ant. of the House of Brunswick*, Posth. Works, vol. ii. 4to.

<sup>2</sup> *He.*] " Henrie, the brother of this Edmund, and son to the foresaid king of Almaine (Richard, brother of Henry III of England) as he returned from Affrike, where he had been with Prince Edward, was slain at Viterbo in Italy (whither he was come about business which he had to do with the Pope) by the hand of Guy de Montfort, the son of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, in revenge of the same Simon's death. The murther was committed afore the high altar, as the same Henrie kneeled there to hear divine service." A.D. 1272. Holinshed's *Chron.* p. 275. See also Giov. Villani, *Hist. lib. 7. cap. xl.*, where it is said " that the heart of Henry was put into a golden cup, and placed on a pillar at London bridge over the

Which yet is honour'd on the bank of Thames."

A race I next espied who held the head,  
And even all the bust, above the stream.  
'Midst these I many a face remember'd well.  
Thus shallow more and more the blood became,  
So that at last it but imbru'd the feet ;  
And there our passage lay athwart the foss.

" As ever on this side the boiling wave  
Thou seest diminishing," the Centaur said,  
" So on the other, be thou well assured,  
It lower still and lower sinks its bed,  
Till in that part it re-uniting join,  
Where 'tis the lot of tyranny to mourn.  
There Heaven's stern justice lays chastising  
hand

On Attila, who was the scourge of earth,  
On Sextus and on Pyrrhus,<sup>1</sup> and extracts  
Tears ever by the seething flood unlock'd  
From the Rinieri, of Corneto this,  
Pazzo the other named,<sup>2</sup> who fill'd the ways

---

river Thames, for a memorial to the English of the said outrage." Lombardi suggests that "ancor si cola" in the text may mean, not that "the heart was still honoured," but that it was put into a perforated cup in order that the blood dripping from it might excite the spectators to revenge. This is surely too improbable.

<sup>1</sup> *On Sextus and on Pyrrhus.]* Sextus, either the son of Tarquin the Proud, or of Pompey the Great; and Pyrrhus, king of Epirus.

<sup>2</sup> ————— *The Rinieri, of Corneto this,*  
*Pazzo the other named.————]*

Two noted marauders, by whose depredations the public

With violence and war." This said, he turn'd,  
And quitting us, alone repass'd the ford.

---

## CANTO XIII

---

### Argument.

Still in the seventh circle, Dante enters its second compartment, which contains both those who have done violence on their own persons and those who have violently consumed their goods ; the first changed into rough and knotted trees whereon the harpies build their nests, the latter chased and torn by black female mastiffs. Among the former, Piero delle Vigne is one who tells him the cause of his having committed suicide, and moreover in what manner the souls are transformed into those trunks. Of the latter crew, he recognizes Lano, a Siennese, and Giacomo, a Paduan ; and lastly, a Florentine, who had hung himself from his own roof, speaks to him of the calamities of his countrymen.

ERE Nessus yet had reached the other bank,  
We enter'd on a forest, where no track  
Of steps had worn a way. Not verdant there  
The foliage, but of dusky hue ; not light  
The boughs and tapering, but with knares  
deform'd  
And matted thick : fruits there were none,  
but thorns  
Instead, with venom fill'd. Less sharp than  
these,  
Less intricate the brakes, wherein abide

---

ways in Italy were infested. The latter was of the noble family of Pazzi in Florence.

Those animals, that hate the cultured fields,  
Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's stream.<sup>1</sup>

Here the brute Harpies make their nest, the same

Who from the Strophades <sup>2</sup> the Trojan band  
Drove with dire boding of their future woe.  
Broad are their pennons, of the human form  
Their neck and countenance, arm'd with talons  
keen

The feet, and the huge belly fledge with wings.  
These sit and wail on the drear mystic wood.

The kind instructor in these words began :  
“ Ere farther thou proceed, know thou art now  
I' th' second round, and shalt be, till thou come  
Upon the horrid sand : look therefore well  
Around thee, and such things thou shalt be-  
hold,

As would my speech discredit.” On all sides  
I heard sad plainings breathe, and none could  
see

From whom they might have issued. In  
amaze

Fast bound I stood. He, as it seem'd, be-  
lieved

<sup>1</sup> *Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's stream.*] A wild and woody tract of country, abounding in deer, goats, and wild boars. Cecina is a river not far to the south of Leghorn ; Corneto, a small city on the same coast, in the patrimony of the Church.

<sup>2</sup> *The Strophades.*] See Virg. *Aen.* lib. 3. 210.

That I had thought so many voices came  
 From some amid those thickets close conceal'd,  
 And thus his speech resumed : " If thou lop  
 off

A single twig from one of those ill plants,  
 The thought thou hast conceived shall vanish  
 quite."

Thereat a little stretching forth my hand,  
 From a great wilding gather'd I a branch,  
 And straight the trunk exclaimed : " Why  
 pluck'st thou me ? "

Then, as the dark blood trickled down its  
 side,

These words it added : " Wherefore tear'st  
 me thus ?

Is there no touch of mercy in thy breast ?  
 Men once were we, that now are rooted here.  
 Thy hand might well have spared us, had we  
 been

The souls of serpents." As a brand yet green,  
 That burning at one end from the other sends  
 A groaning sound, and hisses with the wind  
 That forces out its way, so burst at once  
 Forth from the broken splinter words and  
 blood.

I, letting fall the bough, remained as one  
 Assail'd by terror ; and the sage replied :  
 " If he, O injured spirit ! could have believed

What he hath seen but in my verse described,<sup>1</sup>  
 He never against thee had stretch'd his hand.  
 But I, because the thing surpass'd belief,  
 Prompted him to this deed, which even now  
 Myself I rue. But tell me, who thou wast;  
 That, for this wrong to do thee some amends,  
 In the upper world (for thither to return  
 Is granted him) thy fame he may revive."  
 "That pleasant word of thine,"<sup>2</sup> the trunk re-  
 plied,

"Hath so inveigled me, that I from speech  
 Cannot refrain, wherein if I indulge  
 A little longer, in the snare detain'd,  
 Count it not grievous. I it was,<sup>3</sup> who held

<sup>1</sup> *In my verse described.*] The commentators explain this, "If he could have believed, in consequence of my assurances alone, that of which he hath now had ocular proof, he would not have stretched forth his hand against thee." But I am of opinion that Dante makes Virgil allude to his own story of Polydorus, in the third book of the *Aeneid*.

<sup>2</sup> *That pleasant word of thine.]* "Since you have inveigled me to speak by holding forth so gratifying an expectation, let it not displease you if I am as it were detained in the snare you have spread for me, so as to be somewhat prolix in my answer."

<sup>3</sup> *I it was.]* Piero delle Vigne, a native of Capua, who from a low condition raised himself, by his eloquence and legal knowledge, to the office of Chancellor to the Emperor Frederick II; whose confidence in him was such, that his influence in the empire became unbounded. The courtiers, envious of his exalted situation, contrived, by means of forged letters, to make Frederick believe that he held a secret and traitorous intercourse with the Pope, who was then at enmity with the Emperor. In consequence of this supposed crime, he was cruelly condemned

Both keys to Frederick's heart, and turn'd the  
wards,

Opening and shutting, with a skill so sweet,  
That besides me, into his inmost breast  
Scarce any other could admittance find.

The faith I bore to my high charge was such,  
It cost me the life-blood that warm'd my veins.  
The harlot,<sup>1</sup> who ne'er turn'd her gloating eyes  
From Cæsar's household, common vice and pest  
Of courts, 'gainst me inflamed the minds of all ;  
And to Augustus they so spread the flame,  
That my glad honours changed to bitter woes.  
My soul, disdainful and disgusted, sought  
Refuge in death from scorn, and I became,  
Just as I was, unjust toward myself.

By the new roots, which fix this stem, I swear,  
That never faith I broke to my liege lord,  
Who merited such honour ; and of you ,  
If any to the world indeed return,

by his too credulous sovereign, to lose his eyes ; and being driven to despair by his unmerited calamity and disgrace, he put an end to his life by dashing out his brains against the walls of a church, in the year 1245. Both Frederick and Piero delle Vigne composed verses in the Sicilian dialect which are now extant. A canzone by each of them may be seen in the ninth book of the *Sonetti* and *Canzoni di diversi Autori Toscani*, published by the Giunti in 1527. See further the Note on *Purg.* Canto iii. 110.

<sup>1</sup> *The harlot.]* Envy. Chaucer alludes to this, in the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women* :

Envie is lavender to the court alaway,  
For she ne parteth neither night ne day  
Out of the house of Cesar : thus saith Dant.

Clear he from wrong my memory, that lies  
Yet prostrate under envy's cruel blow."

First somewhat pausing, till the mournful  
words

Were ended, then to me the bard began :  
" Lose not the time ; but speak, and of him  
ask,

If more thou wish to learn." Whence I re-  
plied :

" Question thou him again of whatsoe'er  
Will, as thou think'st, content me ; for no  
power

Have I to ask, such pity is at my heart."

He thus resumed : " So may he do for thee  
Freely what thou entreatest, as thou yet  
Be pleased, imprison'd spirit ! to declare,  
How in these gnarled joints the soul is tied ;  
And, whether any ever from such frame  
Be loosen'd, if thou canst, that also tell."

Thereat the trunk breathed hard, and the  
wind soon

Changed into sounds articulate like these :

" Briefly ye shall be answer'd. When departs  
The fierce soul from the body, by itself  
Thence torn asunder, to the seventh gulf  
By Minos doom'd, into the wood it falls,  
No place assign'd, but wheresoever chance  
Hurls it ; there sprouting, as a grain of spelt,

It rises to a sapling, growing thence  
 A savage plant. The Harpies, on its leaves  
 Then feeding, cause both pain, and for the pain  
 A vent to grief. We, as the rest, shall come  
 For our own spoils, yet not so that with them  
 We may again be clad ; for what a man  
 Takes from himself it is not just he have.  
 Here we perforce shall drag them ; and throughout

The dismal glade our bodies shall be hung,  
 Each on the wild thorn of his wretched shade."

Attentive yet to listen to the trunk  
 We stood, expecting further speech, when us  
 A noise surprised ; as when a man perceives  
 The wild boar and the hunt approach his place  
 Of station'd watch, who of the beast and boughs  
 Loud rustling round him hears. And lo ! there  
 came

Two naked, torn with briars, in headlong flight  
 That they before them broke each fan o'th'  
 wood.

" Haste now," the foremost cried, " now haste  
 thee, death ! "

The other, as seem'd, impatient of delay,  
 Exclaiming, " Lano ! <sup>1</sup> not so bent for speed

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<sup>1</sup> *Lano.*] Lano, a Siennese, who, being reduced by prodigality to a state of extreme want, found his existence no longer supportable ; and, having been sent by his

Thy sinews, in the lists of Toppo's field." And then, for that perchance no longer breath Sufficed him, of himself and of a bush One group he made. Behind them was the wood

Full of black female mastiffs, gaunt and fleet, As greyhounds that have newly slipp'd the leash. On him, who squatted down, they stuck their fangs,

And having rent him piecemeal bore away The tortured limbs. My guide then seized my hand,

And led me to the thicket, which in vain Mourn'd through its bleeding wounds : " O Giacomo

Of Sant' Andrea !<sup>1</sup> what avails it thee," It cried, " that of me thou hast made thy screen ?

For thy ill life, what blame on me recoils ? "

When o'er it he had paused, my master spake : " Say who wast thou, that at so many points

---

countrymen on a military expedition to assist the Florentines against the Aretini, took that opportunity of exposing himself to certain death, in the engagement which took place at Toppo near Arezzo. See G. Villani, *Hist. lib. 7. cap. cxix.*

<sup>1</sup> ————— O Giacomo

Of Sant' Andrea !] Jacopo da Sant' Andrea, a Paduan, who, having wasted his property in the most wanton acts of profusion, killed himself in despair.

Breathest out with blood thy lamentable speech ? ”

He answer'd : “ O ye spirits ! arrived in time  
 To spy the shameful havoc that from me  
 My leaves hath sever'd thus, gather them up,  
 And at the foot of their sad parent-tree  
 Carefully lay them. In that city <sup>1</sup> I dwelt,  
 Who for the Baptist her first patron changed,  
 Whence he for this shall cease not with his art  
 To work her woe : and if there still remain'd not  
 On Arno's passage some faint glimpse of him,  
 Those citizens, who rear'd once more her walls  
 Upon the ashes left by Attila,  
 Had labour'd without profit of their toil.  
 I slung the fatal noose <sup>2</sup> from my own roof.”

<sup>1</sup> *In that city.*] “ I was an inhabitant of Florence, that city which changed her first patron Mars for St. John the Baptist ; for which reason the vengeance of the deity thus slighted will never be appeased ; and if some remains of his statue were not still visible on the bridge over the Arno, she would have been already levelled to the ground ; and thus the citizens, who raised her again from the ashes to which Attila had reduced her, would have laboured in vain.” See *Paradiso*, Canto xvi. 44. The relic of antiquity, to which the superstition of Florence attached so high an importance, was carried away by a flood, that destroyed the bridge on which it stood, in the year 1337, but without the ill effects that were apprehended from the loss of their fancied Palladium.

<sup>2</sup> *I slung the fatal noose.*] We are not informed who this suicide was ; some calling him Rocco de' Mozzi, and others Lotto degli Agli.

## CANTO XIV

## Argument.

They arrive at the beginning of the third of those compartments into which this seventh circle is divided. It is a plain of dry and hot sand, where three kinds of violence are punished; namely, against God, against Nature, and against Art; and those who have thus sinned, are tormented by flakes of fire, which are eternally showering down upon them. Among the violent against God is found Capaneus, whose blasphemies they hear. Next, turning to the left along the forest of self-slayers, and having journeyed a little onwards, they meet with a streamlet of blood that issues from the forest and traverses the sandy plain. Here Virgil speaks to our Poet of a huge ancient statue that stands within Mount Ida in Crete, from a fissure in which statue there is a dripping of tears, from which the said streamlet, together with the three other infernal rivers, are formed.

SOON as the charity of native land  
 Wrought in my bosom, I the scatter'd leaves  
 Collected, and to him restored, who now  
 Was hoarse with utterance. To the limit thence  
 We came, which from the third the second  
 round

Divides, and where of justice is display'd  
 Contrivance horrible. Things then first seen  
 Clearlier to manifest, I tell how next  
 A plain we reach'd, that from its steril bed  
 Each plant repell'd. The mournful wood waves  
 round

Its garland on all sides, as round the wood  
 Spreads the sad foss. There, on the very edge,

Our steps we stay'd. It was an area wide  
Of arid sand and thick, resembling most  
The soil that erst by Cato's foot was trod.  
Vengeance of Heaven ! Oh ! how shouldst thou  
be fear'd

By all, who read what here mine eyes beheld  
    Of naked spirits many a flock I saw,  
All weeping piteously, to different laws  
Subjected ; for on the earth some lay supine,  
Some crouching close were seated, others paced  
Incessantly around ; the latter tribe  
More numerous, those fewer who beneath  
The torment lay, but louder in their grief.

O'er all the sand fell slowly wafting down  
Dilated flakes of fire, as flakes of snow  
On Alpine summit, when the wind is hush'd.  
As, in the torrid Indian clime,<sup>1</sup> the son  
Of Ammon saw, upon his warrior band  
Descending, solid flames, that to the ground  
Came down ; whence he bethought him with  
    his troop

To trample on the soil ; for easier thus  
The vapour was extinguish'd, while alone :  
So fell the eternal fiery flood, wherewith  
The marle glow'd underneath, as under stove  
The viands, doubly to augment the pain.

<sup>1</sup> As, in the torrid Indian clime.] Landino refers to Albertus Magnus for the circumstance here alluded to.

Unceasing was the play of wretched hands,  
Now this, now that way glancing, to shake off  
The heat, still falling fresh. I thus began :  
“ Instructor ! thou who all things overcomest,  
Except the hardy demons that rush’d forth  
To stop our entrance at the gate, say who  
Is yon huge spirit that, as seems, heeds not  
The burning, but lies writhen in proud scorn,  
As by the sultry tempest immatured ? ”

Straight he himself, who was aware I ask’d  
My guide of him, exclaimed ; “ Such as I was  
When living, dead such now I am. If Jove  
Weary his workman out, from whom in ire  
He snatch’d the lightnings, that at my last day  
Transfix’d me ; if the rest he weary out,  
At their black smithy labouring by turns,  
In Mongibello, while he cries aloud,  
‘ Help, help, good Mulciber ! ’ as erst he cried  
In the Phlegræan warfare ; and the bolts  
Launch he, full aim’d at me, with all his might ;  
He never should enjoy a sweet revenge.”

Then thus my guide, in accent higher raised  
Than I before had heard him : “ Capaneus !  
Thou art more punish’d, in that this thy pride  
Lives yet unquench’d : no torment, save thy  
rage,

Were to thy fury pain proportion’d full.”

Next turning round to me, with milder lip,

He spake : " This of the seven kings was one,  
Who girt the Theban walls with siege, and held,  
As still he seems to hold, God in disdain,  
And sets his high omnipotence at naught.  
But, as I told him, his despiteful mood  
Is ornament well suits the breast that wears it.  
Follow me now ; and look thou set not yet  
Thy foot in the hot sand, but to the wood  
Keep ever close." Silently on we pass'd  
To where there gushes from the forest's bound  
A little brook, whose crimson'd wave yet lifts  
My hair with horror. As the rill, that runs  
From Bulicame,<sup>1</sup> to be portion'd out  
Among the sinful women ; so ran this  
Down through the sand ; its bottom and each  
bank  
Stone-built, and either margin at its side,  
Whereon I straight perceived our passage lay.

" Of all that I have shown thee, since that  
gate

We enter'd first, whose threshold is to none  
Denied, naught else so worthy of regard,  
As is this river, has thine eye discern'd,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Bulicame.*] A warm medicinal spring near Viterbo, the waters of which, as Landino and Vellutello affirm passed by a place of ill-fame. Venturi, with less probability, conjectures that Dante would imply that it was the scene of much licentious merriment among those who frequented its baths.

O'er which the flaming volley all is quench'd."

So spake my guide ; and I him thence besought,

That having given me appetite to know,  
The food he too would give, that hunger craved.

" In midst of ocean," forthwith he began,  
" A desolate country lies, which Crete is named ;  
Under whose monarch, in old times, the world  
Lived pure and chaste. A mountain rises there,  
Call'd Ida, joyous once with leaves and streams,  
Deserted now like a forbidden thing.

It was the spot which Rhea, Saturn's spouse,  
Chose for the secret cradle of her son ;  
And better to conceal him, drown'd in shouts  
His infant cries. Within the mount, upright  
An ancient form there stands, and huge, that  
turns

His shoulders towards Damiata ; and at Rome,  
As in his mirror, looks. Of finest gold  
His head is shaped, pure silver are the breast  
And arms, thence to the middle is of brass,  
And downward all beneath well-tempered  
steel,

Save the right foot of potter's clay, on which  
Than on the other more erect he stands.

Each part, except the gold, is rent throughout ;  
And from the fissure tears distil, which join'd  
Penetrate to that cave. They in their course,

Thus far precipitated down the rock,  
 Form Acheron, and Styx, and Phlegethon ;  
 Then by this straiten'd channel passing hence  
 Beneath, e'en to the lowest depth of all,  
 Form there Cocytus, of whose lake (thyself  
 Shalt see it) I here give thee no account."

Then I to him : " If from our world this  
 sluice

Be thus derived ; wherefore to us but now  
 Appears it at this edge ? " He straight replied :  
 " The place, thou know'st, is round ; and  
 though great part

Thou have already past, still to the left  
 Descending to the nethermost, not yet  
 Hast thou the circuit made of the whole orb.  
 Wherefore, if aught of new to us appear,  
 It needs not bring up wonder in thy looks."

Then I again inquired : " Where flow the  
 streams

Of Phlegethon and Lethe ? for of one  
 Thou tell'st not ; and the other, of that shower,  
 Thou say'st, is form'd." He answer thus re-  
 turn'd :

" Doubtless thy questions all well pleased I  
 hear.

Yet the red seething wave <sup>1</sup> might have resolved

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<sup>1</sup> *The red seething wave.]* This he might have known  
 was Phlegethon.

One thou proposest. Lethe thou shalt see,  
 But not within this hollow, in the place  
 Whither,<sup>1</sup> to lave themselves, the spirits go,  
 Whose blame hath been by penitence removed.”  
 He added : “ Time is now we quit the wood.  
 Look thou my steps pursue : the margins give  
 Safe passage, unimpeded by the flames ;  
 For over them all vapour is extinct.”

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## CANTO XV

### Argument.

Taking their way upon one of the mounds by which the streamlet, spoken of in the last Canto, was embanked, and having gone so far that they could no longer have discerned the forest if they had turned round to look for it, they meet a troop of spirits that come along the sand by the side of the pier. These are they who have done violence to Nature ; and amongst them Dante distinguishes Brunetto Latini, who had been formerly his master ; with whom, turning a little backward, he holds a discourse which occupies the remainder of this Canto.

ONE of the solid margins bears us now  
 Envelop'd in the mist, that, from the stream  
 Arising, hovers o'er, and saves from fire  
 Both piers and water. As the Flemings rear  
 Their mound, 'twixt Ghent and Bruges, to  
 chase back  
 The ocean, fearing his tumultuous tide

---

<sup>1</sup> *Whither.]* On the other side of Purgatory.

That drives toward them ; or the Paduans  
theirs

Along the Brenta, to defend their towns  
And castles, ere the genial warmth be felt  
On Chiarentana's <sup>1</sup> top ; such were the mounds,  
So framed, though not in height or bulk to  
these

Made equal, by the master, whosoe'er  
He was, that raised them here. We from the  
wood

Were now so far removed, that turning round  
I might not have discern'd it, when we met  
A troop of spirits, who came beside the pier.

They each one eyed us, as at eventide  
One eyes another under a new moon ;  
And toward us sharpen'd their sight, as keen  
As an old tailor at his needle's eye.

Thus narrowly explored by all the tribe,  
I was agnized of one, who by the skirt  
Caught me, and cried, " What wonder have we  
here ? "

And I, when he to me outstretch'd his arm,  
Intently fix'd my ken on his parch'd looks,  
That, although smirch'd with fire they hinder'd  
not

---

<sup>1</sup> *Chiarentana.*] A part of the Alps where the Brenta rises ; which river is much swollen as soon as the snow begins to dissolve on the mountains.

But I remember'd him ; and towards his face  
 My hand inclining, answer'd : " Ser Brunetto ! <sup>1</sup>  
 And are ye here ? " He thus to me : " My  
 son !

Oh let it not displease thee, if Brunetto  
 Latini but a little space with thee  
 Turn back, and leave his fellows to proceed."

I thus to him replied : " Much as I can,  
 I thereto pray thee ; and if thou be willing  
 That I here seat me with thee, I consent ;  
 His leave, with whom I journey, first obtain'd."

" O son ! " said he, " whoever of this throng  
 One instant stops, lies then a hundred years,  
 No fan to ventilate him, when the fire  
 Smites sorest. Pass thou therefore on. I  
 close

Will at thy garments walk and then rejoin  
 My troop, who go mourning their endless  
 doom."

<sup>1</sup> *Brunetto.*] " Ser Brunetto, a Florentine, the secretary or chancellor of the city, and Dante's preceptor, hath left us a work so little read, that both the subject of it and the language of it have been mistaken. It is in the French spoken in the reign of St. Louis, under the title of *Tresor*; and contains a species of philosophical course of lectures divided into theory and practice, or, as he expresses it, *un enchaussement des choses divines et humaines*, etc. Sir R. Clayton's Translation of Tenhove's *Memoirs of the Medici*, vol. i. ch. ii. p. 104. The *Tresor* has never been printed in the original language. There is a fine manuscript of it in the British Museum, with an illuminated portrait of Brunetto in his study, prefixed. Mus. Brit. MSS. 17 E. 1. Tesor.

I dared not from the path descend to tread  
On equal ground with him, but held my head  
Bent down, as one who walks in reverent guise.

“ What chance or destiny,” thus he began,  
“ Ere the last day, conducts thee here below ?  
And who is this that shows to thee the way ? ”

“ There up aloft,” I answer’d, “ in the life  
Serene, I wander’d in a valley lost,  
Before mine age <sup>1</sup> had to its fulness reach’d.  
But yester-morn I left it : then once more  
Into that vale returning, him I met ;  
And by this path homeward he leads me back.”

“ If thou,” he answer’d, “ follow but thy  
star,

Thou canst not miss at last a glorious haven ;  
Unless in fairer days my judgment err’d.  
And if my fate so early had not chanced,  
Seeing the heavens thus bounteous to thee, I  
Had gladly given thee comfort in thy work.  
But that ungrateful and malignant race,  
Who in old times came down from Fesole,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Before mine age.*] On the whole, Vellutello’s explanation of this is, I think, most satisfactory. He supposes it to mean, “ before the appointed end of his life was arrived —before his days were accomplished.” Lombardi, concluding that the fulness of age must be the same as “ the midway of this our mortal life ” (see Canto i. v. 1), understands that he had lost himself in the wood before that time, and that he then only discovered his having gone astray.

Ay and still smack of their rough mountain  
flint,

Will for thy good deeds show thee enmity.  
Nor wonder ; for amongst ill-savour'd crabs  
It suits not the sweet fig-tree lay her fruit.  
Old fame reports them in the world for blind,<sup>1</sup>  
Covetous, envious, proud. Look to it well :  
Take heed thou cleanse thee of their ways.

For thee,

Thy fortune hath such honour in reserve,  
That thou by either party shalt be craved  
With hunger keen : but be the fresh herb far  
From the goat's tooth. The herd of Fesole  
May of themselves make litter, not touch the  
plant,

If any such yet spring on their rank bed,  
In which the holy seed revives, transmitted  
From those true Romans, who still there  
remain'd,

When it was made the nest of so much ill."

" Were all my wish fulfill'd," I straight  
replied,

" Thou from the confines of man's nature yet  
Hadst not been driven forth ; for in my mind  
Is fixed, and now strikes full upon my heart,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Blind.*] It is said that the Florentines were thus called, in consequence of their having been deceived by a shallow artifice practised on them by the Pisans, in the year 1117. See G. Villani, lib. 4. cap. xxx.

The dear, benign, paternal image, such  
As thine was, when so lately thou didst teach  
me

The way for man to win eternity :  
And how I prized the lesson, it behoves,  
That, long as life endures, my tongue should  
speak.

What of my fate thou tell'st, that write I down ;  
And, with another text <sup>1</sup> to comment on,  
For her I keep it, the celestial dame,  
Who will know all, if I to her arrive.

This only would I have thee clearly note :  
That, so my conscience have no plea against  
me,

Do Fortune as she list, I stand prepared.  
Not new or strange such earnest to mine  
ear.

Speed Fortune then her wheel, as likes her  
best ;  
The clown his mattock ; all things have their  
course."

Thereat my sapient guide upon his right  
Turned himself back, then look'd at me, and  
spake :

" He listens to good purpose who takes note."  
I not the less still on my way proceed,

---

<sup>1</sup> *With another text.]* He refers to the prediction of Farinata, in Canto x.

Discoursing with Brunetto, and inquire  
Who are most known and chief among his  
tribe.

“ To know of some is well ; ” he thus replied,  
“ But of the rest silence may best beseem.  
Time would not serve us for report so long.  
In brief I tell thee, that all these were clerks,  
Men of great learning and no less renown,  
By one same sin polluted in the world.  
With them is Priscian ; <sup>1</sup> and Accorso’s son,  
Francesco, <sup>2</sup> herds among that wretched throng :  
And, if the wish of so impure a blotch  
Possess’d thee, him <sup>3</sup> thou also mightst have  
seen,

<sup>1</sup> *Priscian.*] There is no reason to believe, as the commentators observe, that the grammarian of this name was stained with the vice imputed to him ; and we must therefore suppose that Dante puts the individual for the species, and implies the frequency of the crime among those who abused the opportunities which the education of youth afforded them, to so abominable a purpose.

<sup>2</sup> *Francesco.*] Accorso, a Florentine, interpreted the Roman law at Bologna, and died in 1229, at the age of 78. His authority was so great as to exceed that of all the other interpreters, so that Cino da Pistoia termed him the Idol of Advocates. His sepulchre, and that of his son Francesco here spoken of, is at Bologna, with this short epitaph : “ Sepulcrum Accursii Glossatoris et Francisci ejus Filii.” See Guidi Panziroli, *De Claris Legum Interpretibus*, lib. 2. cap. xxix. Lips, 4to, 1721.

<sup>3</sup> *Him.*] Andrea de’ Mozzi, who, that his scandalous life might be less exposed to observation, was translated either by Nicholas III or Boniface VIII from the see of Florence to that of Vicenza, through which passes the river Bacchiglione. At the latter of these places he died.

Who by the servants' servant was transferr'd  
 From Arno's seat to Bacchiglione, where  
 His ill-strain'd nerves he left. I more would  
 add,

But must from further speech and onward way  
 Alike desist ; for yonder I behold.

A mist new risen on the sandy plain.

A company, with whom I may not sort,  
 Approaches. I commend my *Treasure* to  
 Thee,<sup>1</sup>

Wherein I yet survive ; my sole request."

This said, he turn'd, and seem'd as one of  
 those

Who o'er Verona's champain try their speed  
 For the green mantle ; and of them he seem'd,  
 Not he who loses but who gains the prize.

## CANTO XVI

### Argument.

Journeying along the pier, which crosses the sand, they are now so near the end of it as to hear the noise of the stream falling into the eighth circle, when they meet the spirits of three military men ; who judging Dante, from his dress, to be a countryman of theirs, entreat him to stop. He complies, and speaks with them. The two Poets then reach the place where the water descends, being the termination of this third compart-

<sup>1</sup> *I commend my Treasure to thee.] Brunetto's great work, the *Tresor*.*

ment in the seventh circle ; and here Virgil having thrown down into the hollow a cord, wherewith Dante was girt, they behold at that signal a monstrous and horrible figure come swimming up to them.

Now came I where the water's din was heard,  
As down it fell into the other round,  
Resounding like the hum of swarming bees :  
When forth together issued from a troop,  
That pass'd beneath the fierce tormenting  
storm,  
Three spirits, running swift. They towards us  
came,

And each one cried aloud, " Oh ! do thou stay,  
Whom, by the fashion of thy garb, we deem  
To be some inmate of our evil land."

Ah me ! what wounds I mark'd upon their  
limbs,  
Recent and old, inflicted by the flames.  
E'en the remembrance of them grieves me yet.

Attentive to their cry, my teacher paused,  
And turn'd to me his visage, and then spake :  
" Wait now : our courtesy these merit well :  
And were 't not for the nature of the place,  
Whence glide the fiery darts, I should have  
said,

That haste had better suited thee than them."

They, when we stopp'd, resumed their  
ancient wail.

And, soon as they had reach'd us, all the three

Whirl'd round together in one restless wheel.  
As naked champions, smear'd with slippery  
oil,

Are wont, intent, to watch their place of hold  
And vantage, ere in closer strife they meet ;  
Thus each one, as he wheel'd, his countenance  
At me directed, so that opposite  
The neck moved ever to the twinkling feet.

“ If woe of this unsound and dreary waste,”  
Thus one began, “ added to our sad cheer  
Thus peel'd with flame, do call forth scorn on  
us

And our entreaties, let our great renown  
Incline thee to inform us who thou art,  
That dost imprint, with living feet unharmed,  
The soil of Hell. He, in whose track thou seest  
My steps pursuing, naked though he be  
And reft of all, was of more high estate  
Than thou believest ; grandchild of the chaste  
Gualdrada,<sup>1</sup> him they Guidoguerra call'd,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Gualdrada.*] Gualdrada was the daughter of Bellincione Berti, of whom mention is made in the *Paradiso*, Canto xv. and xvi. He was of the family of Ravignani, a branch of the Adimari. The Emperor Otho IV, being at a festival in Florence, where Gualdrada was present, was struck with her beauty ; and inquiring who she was, was answered by Bellincione, that she was the daughter of one who, if it was his Majesty's pleasure, would make her admit the honour of his salute. On overhearing this, she arose from her seat, and blushing, in an animated tone of voice, desired her father that he would not be so liberal.

Who in his lifetime many a noble act  
 Achieved, both by his wisdom and his sword.  
 The other, next to me that beats the sand,  
 Is Aldobrandi<sup>1</sup> name deserving well,  
 In the upper world, of honour ; and myself,  
 Who in this torment do partake with them,  
 Am Rusticucci,<sup>2</sup> whom, past doubt, my wife,  
 Of savage temper, more than aught beside  
 Hath to this evil brought." If from the fire  
 I had been shelter'd, down amidst them  
 straight

in his offers, for that no man should ever be allowed that freedom except him who should be her lawful husband. The Emperor was not less delighted by her resolute modesty than he had before been by the loveliness of her person ; and calling to him Guido, one of his barons, gave her to him in marriage ; at the same time raising him to the rank of a Count, and bestowing on her the whole of Casentino, and a part of the territory of Romagna, as her portion. Two sons were the offspring of this union, Guglielmo and Ruggieri ; the latter of whom was father of Guidoguerra, a man of great military skill and prowess ; who, at the head of four hundred Florentines of the Guelph party, was signally instrumental to the victory obtained at Benevento by Charles of Anjou, over Manfredi, King of Naples, in 1265. One of the consequences of this victory was the expulsion of the Ghibellini, and the re-establishment of the Guelfi at Florence.

<sup>1</sup> *Aldobrandi.*] Tegghiaio Aldobrandi was of the noble family of Adimari, and much esteemed for his military talents. He endeavoured to dissuade the Florentines from the attack which they meditated against the Siennese ; and the rejection of his counsel occasioned the memorable defeat which the former sustained at Montaperto, and the consequent banishment of the Guelfi from Florence.

<sup>2</sup> *Rusticucci.*] Giacopo Rusticucci, a Florentine, remarkable for his opulence and the generosity of his spirit.

I then had cast me ; nor my guide, I deem,  
Would have restrain'd my going : but that  
fear

Of the dire burning vanquish'd the desire,  
Which made me eager of their wish'd embrace.

I then began : " Not scorn, but grief much  
more,

Such as long time alone can cure, your doom  
Fix'd deep within me, soon as this my lord  
Spake words, whose tenor taught me to  
expect

That such a race, as ye are, was at hand.  
I am a countryman of yours, who still  
Affectionate have utter'd, and have heard  
Your deeds and names renown'd. Leaving  
the gall,

For the sweet fruit I go, that a sure guide  
Hath promised to me. But behoves, that far  
As to the centre first I downward tend."

" So may long space thy spirit guide thy  
limbs,"

He answer straight return'd ; " and so thy  
fame

Shine bright when thou art gone, as thou shalt  
tell,

If courtesy and valour, as they wont,  
Dwell in our city, or have vanish'd clean :  
For one amidst us late condemn'd to wail,

Borsiere<sup>1</sup> yonder walking with his peers,  
Grieves us no little by the news he brings."

" An upstart multitude and sudden gains,  
Pride and excess, O Florence ! have in thee  
Engender'd, so that now in tears thou  
mourn'st ! "

Thus cried I, with my face upraised, and  
they

All three, who for an answer took my words,  
Look'd at each other, as men look when truth  
Comes to their ear. " If at so little cost,"<sup>2</sup>  
They all at once rejoin'd, " thou satisfy  
Others who question thee, O happy thou !  
Gifted with words so apt to speak thy thought.  
Wherefore, if thou escape this darksome clime,  
Returning to behold the radiant stars,  
When thou with pleasure shalt retrace the  
past,

See that of us thou speak among mankind."

This said, they broke the circle, and so swift  
Fled, that as pinions seem'd their nimble feet.

Not in so short a time might one have said

<sup>1</sup> *Borsiere.*] Guglielmo Borsiere, another Florentine, whom Boccaccio, in a story which he relates of him, terms " a man of courteous and elegant manners, and of great readiness in conversation." *Dec. Giorn. i. Nov. 8.*

<sup>2</sup> *At so little cost.]* They intimate to our poet (as Lombardi well observes) the inconveniences to which his freedom of speech was about to expose him in the future course of his life.

"Amen," as they had vanish'd. Straight my  
guide  
Pursued his track. I follow'd: and small  
space

Had we past onward, when the water's sound  
Was now so near at hand, that we had scarce  
Heard one another's speech for the loud din.

E'en as the river<sup>1</sup> that first holds its course  
Unmingled, from the Mount of Vesulo,  
On the left side of Apennine, toward  
The east, which Acquacheta higher up  
They call, ere it descend into the vale,  
At Forli<sup>2</sup> by that name no longer known,  
Rebellows o'er Saint Benedict, roll'd on  
From the Alpine summit down a precipice,  
Where space<sup>3</sup> enough to lodge a thousand  
spreads;

Thus downward from a craggy steep we found

---

<sup>1</sup> *E'en as the river.*] He compares the fall of Phlegethon to that of the Montone (a river in Romagna) from the Apennine above the Abbey of St. Benedict. All the other streams, that rise between the sources of the Po and the Montone, and fall from the left side of the Apennine, join the Po, and accompany it to the sea.

<sup>2</sup> *At Forli.*] Because there it loses the name of Acquacheta, and takes that of Montone.

<sup>3</sup> *Where space.*] Either because the abbey was capable of containing more than those who occupied it, or because (says Landino) the lords of that territory, as Boccaccio related on the authority of the abbot, had intended to build a castle near the waterfall, and to collect within its walls the population of the neighbouring villages.

That this dark wave resounded, roaring loud,  
So that the ear its clamour soon had stunn'd.

I had a cord <sup>1</sup> that braced my girdle round,  
Wherewith I erst had thought fast bound to  
take

The painted leopard. This when I had all  
Unloosen'd from me (so my master bade)  
I gather'd up, and stretch'd it forth to him.  
Then to the right he turn'd, and from the brink  
Standing few paces distant, cast it down  
Into the deep abyss. "And somewhat strange,"  
Thus to myself I spake, " signal so strange  
Betokens, which my guide with earnest eye  
Thus follows." Ah ! what caution must men  
use

With those who look not at the deed alone,

<sup>1</sup> *A cord.*] This passage, as it is confessed by Landino, involves a fiction sufficiently obscure. His own attempt to unravel it does not much lessen the difficulty. That which Lombardi has made is something better. It is believed that our Poet, in the earlier part of his life, had entered into the order of St. Francis. By observing the rules of that profession, he had designed to mortify his carnal appetites, or, as he expresses it, "to take the painted leopard" (that animal, which, as we have seen in a note to the first Canto, represented Pleasure) "with this cord." This part of the habit he is now desired by Virgil to take off ; and it is thrown down the gulf, to allure Geryon to them with the expectation of carrying down one who had cloaked his iniquities under the garb of penitence and self mortification ; and thus (to apply to Dante on this occasion the words of Milton)—

He, as Franciscan, thought to pass disguised.

But spy into the thoughts with subtle skill.

"Quickly shall come," he said, "what I expect;

Thine eye discover quickly that, whereof  
Thy thought is dreaming." Ever to that truth,  
Which but the semblance of a falsehood wears,  
A man, if possible, should bar his lip;  
Since, although blameless, he incurs reproach.  
But silence here were vain; and by these  
notes,

Which now I sing, reader, I swear to thee,  
So may they favour find to latest times!

That through the gross and murky air I spied  
A shape come swimming up, that might have  
quell'd

The stoutest heart with wonder; in such guise  
As one returns, who hath been down to loose  
An anchor grappled fast against some rock,  
Or to aught else that in the salt wave lies,  
Who, upward springing, close draws in his feet.

## CANTO XVII

### Argument.

The monster Geryon is described; to whom while Virgil is speaking in order that he may carry them both down to the next circle, Dante, by permission, goes a little farther along the edge of the void, to descry

the third species of sinners contained in this compartment, namely, those who have done violence to Art ; and then returning to his master, they both descend, seated on the back of Geryon.

" Lo ! the fell monster <sup>1</sup> with the deadly sting,  
Who passes mountains, breaks through fenced  
walls

And firm embattled spears, and with his filth  
Taints all the world." Thus me my guide  
address'd,

And beckon'd him, that he should come to  
shore,

Near to the stony causeway's utmost edge.

Forthwith that image vile of Fraud appear'd,  
His head and upper part exposed on land,  
But laid not on the shore his bestial train.  
His face the semblance of a just man's wore,  
So kind and gracious was its outward cheer ;  
The rest was serpent all : two shaggy claws  
Reach'd to the arm pits ; and the back and  
breast.

And either side, were painted o'er with nodes  
And orbits. Colours variegated more  
Nor Turks nor Tartars e'er on cloth of state  
With interchangeable embroidery wove,  
Nor spread Arachne o'er her curious loom.  
As oft-times a light skiff, moor'd to the shore,

<sup>1</sup> *The fell monster.] Fraud.*

Stands part in water, part upon the land ;  
Or, as where dwells the greedy German boor,  
The beaver settles, watching for his prey ;  
So on the rim, that fenced the sand with rock,  
Sat perch'd the fiend of evil. In the void  
Glancing, his tail upturn'd its venomous fork,  
With sting like scorpion's arm'd. Then thus  
my guide :

" Now need our way must turn few steps  
apart,

Far as to that ill beast, who couches there."

Thereat, toward the right our downward  
course

We shaped, and, better to escape the flame  
And burning marle, ten paces on the verge  
Proceeded. Soon as we to him arrive,  
A little farther on mine eye beholds  
A tribe of spirits, seated on the sand  
Near to the void. Forthwith my master  
spake :

" That to the full thy knowledge may extend  
Of all this round contains, go now, and mark  
The mien these wear ; but hold not long dis-  
course.

Till thou returnest, I with him meantime  
Will parley, that to us he may vouchsafe  
The aid of his strong shoulders." Thus alone,  
Yet forward on the extremity I paced

Of that seventh circle, where the mournful  
tribe

Were seated. At the eyes forth gush'd their  
pangs.

Against the vapours and the torrid soil  
Alternately their shifting hands they plied.  
Thus use the dogs in summer still to ply  
Their jaws and feet by turns, when bitten sore  
By gnats, or flies, or gadflies swarming round.

Noting the visages of some, who lay  
Beneath the pelting of that dolorous fire,  
One of them all I knew not ; but perceived,  
That pendent from his neck each bore a pouch <sup>1</sup>  
With colours and with emblems various mark'd,  
On which it seem'd as if their eye did feed.  
And when, amongst them, looking round I  
came,

A yellow purse <sup>2</sup> I saw with azure wrought,  
That wore a lion's countenance and port.

Then, still my sight pursuing its career,  
Another <sup>3</sup> I beheld, than blood more red,

<sup>1</sup> *A pouch.*] A purse, whereon the armorial bearings of each were emblazoned. According to Landino, our Poet implies that the usurer can pretend to no other honour than such as he derives from his purse and his family. The description of persons by their heraldic insignia is remarkable both on the present and several other occasions in this poem.

<sup>2</sup> *A yellow purse.*] The arms of the Gianfigliazzi of Florence.

<sup>3</sup> *Another.*] Those of the Ubbriachi, another Florentine family of high distinction.

A goose display of whiter wing than curd.  
 And one, who bore a fat and azure swine<sup>1</sup>  
 Pictured on his white scrip, address'd me thus :  
 " What dost thou in this deep ? Go now and  
 know,

Since yet thou livest, that my neighbour here  
 Vitaliano<sup>2</sup> on my left shall sit.

A Paduan with these Florentines am I.  
 Oft-times they thunder in mine ears, exclaim-  
 ing,

' Oh ! haste that noble knight,<sup>3</sup> he who the  
 pouch  
 ' With the three goats will bring.' " This said,  
 he writhed

The mouth, and loll'd the tongue out, like an ox  
 That licks his nostrils. I, lest longer stay  
 He ill might brook, who bade me stay not long,  
 Backward my steps from those sad spirits  
 turn'd.

My guide already seated on the haunch  
 Of the fierce animal I found ; and thus  
 He me encouraged. " Be thou stout : be  
 bold.

Down such a steep flight must we now descend.

<sup>1</sup> A fat and azure swine.] The arms of the Scrovigni,  
 a noble family of Padua.

<sup>2</sup> Vitaliano.] Vitaliano del Dente, a Paduan.

<sup>3</sup> That noble knight.] Giovanni Bujamonti, a Florentine  
 usurer, the most infamous of this time.

Mount thou before : for, that no power the tail  
May have to harm thee, I will be i' th' midst."

As one<sup>1</sup> who hath an ague fit so near,  
His nails already are turn'd blue, and he  
Quivers all o'er, if he but eye the shade ;  
Such was my cheer at hearing of his words.  
But shame soon interposed her threat, who  
makes

The servant bold in presence of his lord.

I settled me upon those shoulders huge,  
And would have said, but that the words to aid  
My purpose came not, "Look thou clasp me  
firm."

But he whose succour then not first I proved,  
Soon as I mounted, in his arms aloft,  
Embracing, held me up ; and thus he spake :  
"Geryon ! now move thee : be thy wheeling  
gyres

Of ample circuit, easy thy descent.

Think on the unusual burden thou sustain'st."

As a small vessel, backening out from land.  
Her station quits ; so thence the monster  
loosed,  
And, when he felt himself at large, turn'd  
round

<sup>1</sup> *As one.*] Dante trembled with fear, like a man who, expecting the return of a quartan ague, shakes even at the sight of a place made cool by the shade.

There, where the breast had been, his forked tail.

Thus, like an eel, outstretch'd at length he steer'd,

Gathering the air up with retractile claws.

Not greater was the dread, when Phaëton  
The reins let drop at random, whence high heaven,

Whereof signs yet appear, was wrapt in flames ;  
Nor when ill-fated Icarus perceived.

By liquefaction of the scalded wax,  
The trusted pennons loosen'd from his loins,  
His sire exclaiming loud, " Ill way thou  
keep'st,"

Than was my dread, when round me on each part

The air I view, and other object none  
Save the fell beast. He, slowly sailing, wheels  
His downward motion, unobserved of me,  
But that the wind, arising to my face,  
Breathes on me from below. Now on our right

I heard the cataract beneath us leap  
With hideous crash ; whence bending down  
to explore,

New terror I conceived at the steep plunge ;  
For flames I saw, and wailings smote mine ear :

So that, all trembling, close I crouch'd my limbs,  
 And then distinguish'd, unperceived before  
 By the dread torments that on every side  
 Drew nearer, how our downward course we  
 wound.

As falcon, that hath long been on the wing,  
 But lure nor bird hath seen, while in despair  
 The falconer cries, " Ah me ! thou stoop'st to  
 earth,"

Wearied descends, whence nimbly he rose  
 In many an airy wheel, and lighting sits  
 At distance from his lord in angry mood ;  
 So Geryon lighting places us on foot  
 Low down at base of the deep furrow'd rock,  
 And, of his burden there discharged, forthwith  
 Sprang forward, like an arrow from the string.

---

## CANTO XVIII

### Argument.

The Poet describes the situation and form of the eighth circle, divided into ten gulfs, which contain as many different descriptions of fraudulent sinners ; but in the present Canto he treats only of two sorts ; the first is of those who, either for their own pleasure, or for that of another, have seduced any woman from her duty ; and these are scourged of demons in the first gulf : the other sort is of flatterers, who in the second gulf are condemned to remain immersed in filth.

THERE is a place within the depths of hell

Call'd Malebolge, all of rock dark stain'd  
With hue ferruginous, e'en as the steep  
That round it circling winds. Right in the  
midst

Of that abominable region yawns  
A spacious gulf profound, whereof the frame  
Due time shall tell. The circle, that remains,  
Throughout its round, between the gulf and  
base

Of the high craggy banks, successive forms  
Ten bastions, in its hollow bottom raised.

As where, to guard the walls, full many a foss  
Begirds some stately castle, sure defence  
Affording to the space within ; so here  
Were model'd these : and as like fortresses,  
E'en from their threshold to the brink without,  
Are flank'd with bridges ; from the rock's low  
base

Thus flinty paths advanced, that 'cross the  
moles

And dikes struck onward far as to the gulf,  
That in one bound collected cuts them off.

Such was the place, wherein we found ourselves  
From Geryon's back dislodged. The bard to  
left

Held on his way, and I behind him moved.

On our right hand new misery I saw,  
New pains, new executioners of wrath,

That swarming peopled the first chasm. Below  
Were naked sinners. Hitherward they came,  
Meeting our faces, from the middle point ;  
With us beyond,<sup>1</sup> but with a larger stride.  
E'en thus the Romans,<sup>2</sup> when the year returns  
Of Jubilee, with better speed to rid  
The thronging multitudes, their means devise  
For such as pass the bridge ; that on one side  
All front toward the castle, and approach  
Saint Peter's fane, on the other towards the  
mount.

Each diverse way, along the grisly rock,  
Horn'd demons I beheld, with lashes huge,  
That on their back unmercifully smote.  
Ah ! how they made them bound at the first  
stripe !

None for the second waited, nor the third.

Meantime, as on I pass'd, one met my sight,

<sup>1</sup> *With us beyond.*] Beyond the middle point they tended the same way with us, but their pace was quicker than ours.

<sup>2</sup> *E'en thus the Romans.*] In the year 1300, Pope Boniface VIII, to remedy the inconvenience occasioned by the press of people who were passing over the bridge of St. Angelo during the time of the Jubilee, caused it to be divided lengthwise by a partition ; and ordered, that all those who were going to St. Peter's should keep one side, and those returning the other. G. Villani, who was present, describes the order that was preserved, lib. 8. cap. xxxvi. It was at this time, and on this occasion, as the honest historian tells us, that he first conceived the design of "compiling his book."

Whom soon as view'd, " Of him," cried I,  
" not yet

Mine eye hath had his fill." I therefore stay'd  
My feet to scan him, and the teacher kind  
Paused with me, and consented I should walk  
Backward a space ; and the tormented spirit,  
Who thought to hide him, bent his visage  
down.

But it avail'd him naught ; for I exclaim'd :  
" Thou who dost cast thine eye upon the  
ground,

Unless thy features do belie thee much,  
Venedico <sup>1</sup> art thou. But what brings thee  
Into this bitter seasoning ? " <sup>2</sup> He replied :  
" Unwillingly I answer to thy words.

But thy clear speech, that to my mind recalls  
The world I once inhabited, constrains me.  
Know then 't was I who led fair Ghisola  
To do the Marquis' will, however fame  
The shameful tale have bruited. Nor alone,  
Bologna hither sendeth me to mourn.  
Rather with us the place is so o'erthrong'd

<sup>1</sup> *Venedico.*] Venedico Caccianimico, a Bolognese, who prevailed on his sister Ghisola to prostitute herself to Obizzo da Este, Marquis of Ferrara, whom we have seen among the tyrants, Canto xii.

<sup>2</sup> *Seasoning.*] Salse. Monti, in his *Proposta*, following Benvenuto da Imola, takes this to be the name of a place. If so, a play must have been intended on the word, which cannot be preserved in English.

That not so many tongues this day are taught,  
 Betwixt the Reno and Savena's stream,  
 To answer *Sipa*<sup>1</sup> in their country's phrase.  
 And if of that securer proof thou need,  
 Remember but our craving thirst for gold."

Him speaking thus, a demon with his thong  
 Struck and exclaim'd, "Away, corrupter!  
 here

Women are none for sale." Forthwith I join'd  
 My escort, and few paces thence we came  
 To where a rock forth issued from the bank.  
 That easily ascended, to the right  
 Upon its splinter turning, we depart  
 From those eternal barriers. When arrived  
 Where, underneath, the gaping arch lets pass  
 The scourged souls: "Pause here," the  
 teacher said,

"And let these others miserable now  
 Strike on thy ken; faces not yet beheld,  
 For that together they with us have walk'd."

From the old bridge we eyed the pack, who  
 came  
 From the other side toward us, like the rest,

---

<sup>1</sup> *To answer Sipa.*] He denotes Bologna by its situation between the rivers Savena to the east, and Reno to the west of that city; and by a peculiarity of dialect, the use of the affirmative *sipa* instead either of *si*, or, as Monti will have it, of *sia*.

Excoriate from the lash. My gentle guide,  
By me unquestion'd, thus his speech resumed :  
“ Behold that lofty shade, who this way tends,  
And seems too woe-begone to drop a tear.  
How yet the regal aspect he retains !  
Jason is he, whose skill and prowess won  
The ram from Colchos. To the Lemnian isle  
His passage thither led him, when those bold  
And pitiless women had slain all their males.  
There he with tokens and fair witching words  
Hypsipyle <sup>1</sup> beguiled, a virgin young,  
Who first had all the rest herself beguiled.  
Impregnated, he left her there forlorn.  
Such is the guilt condemns him to this pain.  
Here too Medea's injuries are avenged.  
All bear him company, who like deceit  
To his have practised. And thus much to  
know  
Of the first vale suffice thee, and of those  
Whom its keen torments urge.” Now had we  
come.  
Where, crossing the next pier, the straiten'd  
path  
Bestrides its shoulders to another arch.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Hypsipyle.*] See Apollonius Rhodius, lib. 1. and Valerius Flaccus, lib. 2. Hypsipyle deceived the other women, by concealing her father Thoas, when they had agreed to put all their males to death.

Hence, in the second chasm we heard the ghosts,  
Who gibber in low melancholy sounds,  
With wide-stretch'd nostrils snort, and on themselves  
Smite with their palms. Upon the banks a scurf,  
From the foul steam condensed, encrusting hung,  
That held sharp combat with the sight and smell.

So hollow is the depth, that from no part,  
Save on the summit of the rocky span,  
Could I distinguish aught. Thus far we came ;  
And thence I saw, within the foss below,  
A crown immersed in ordure, that appear'd  
Draff of the human body. There beneath  
Searching with eye inquisitive, I mark'd  
One with his head so grimed, 'twere hard to deem

If he were clerk or layman. Loud he cried :  
“ Why greedily thus bendest more on me,  
Than on these other filthy ones, thy ken ? ”

“ Because, if true my memory,” I replied,  
“ I heretofore have seen thee with dry locks ;  
And thou Alessio<sup>1</sup> art, of Lucca sprung.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Alessio.*] Alessio, of an ancient and considerable family in Lucca, called the Interminei.

Therefore than all the rest I scan thee more."

Then beating on his brain, these words he spake :

" Me thus low down my flatteries have sunk,  
Wherewith I ne'er enough could glut my tongue."

My leader thus : " A little farther stretch .  
Thy face, that thou the visage well mayst note  
Of that besotted, sluttish courtezan,  
Who there doth rend her with defiled nails,  
Now crouching down, now risen on her feet.  
Thaís is this, the harlot, whose false lip  
Answer'd her doting paramour that ask'd,  
' Thankest me much.'—' Say rather, won-  
drously ? '

And seeing this, here satiate be our view."

## CANTO XIX

### Argument.

They come to the third gulf, wherein are punished those who have been guilty of simony. These are fixed with the head downwards in certain apertures, so that no more of them than the legs appears without, and on the soles of their feet are seen burning flames. Dante is taken down by his guide into the bottom of the gulf ; and there finds Pope Nicholas the Fifth, whose evil deeds, together with those of other pontiffs, are bitterly represented. Virgil then carries him up again to the arch, which affords them a passage over the following gulf.

WOE to thee, Simon Magus ! woe to you,

His wretched followers ! who the things of  
God,

Which should be wedded unto goodness, them,  
Rapacious as ye are, do prostitute  
For gold and silver in adultery.

Now must the trumpet sound for you, since  
yours

Is the third chasm. Upon the following vault  
We now had mounted, where the rock impends  
Directly o'er the centre of the foss.

Wisdom Supreme ! how wonderful the art,  
Which thou dost manifest in heaven, in earth,  
And in the evil world, how just a meed  
Allotting by thy virtue unto all.

I saw the livid stone, throughout the sides  
And in its bottom full of apertures,  
All equal in their width, and circular each.  
Nor ample less nor larger they appear'd  
Than, in Saint John's fair dome<sup>1</sup> of me beloved,  
Those framed to hold the pure baptismal  
streams,

One of the which I brake, some few years past,  
To save a whelming infant : and be this

<sup>1</sup> *Saint John's fair dome.*] The apertures in the rock were of the same dimensions as the fonts of St. John the Baptist at Florence ; one of which, Dante says, he had broken, to rescue a child that was playing near and fell in. He intimates that the motive of his breaking the font had been maliciously represented by his enemies.

A seal to undeceive whoever doubts  
The motive of my deed. From out the mouth  
Of every one emerged a sinner's feet,  
And of the legs high upward as the calf.  
The rest beneath was hid. On either foot  
The soles were burning ; whence the flexible  
joints

Glanced with such violent motion, as had snapt  
Asunder cords or twisted withs. As flame,  
Feeding on unctuous matter, glides along  
The surface, scarcely touching where it moves ;  
So here, from heel to point, glided the flames.

"Master ! say who is he, than all the rest  
Glancing in fiercer agony, on whom  
A ruddier flame doth prey ?" I thus inquired.

"If thou be willing," he replied, "that I  
Carry thee down, where least the slope bank  
falls,

He of himself shall tell thee, and his wrongs." 39

I then : "As pleases thee, to me is best.  
Thou art my lord ; and know'st that ne'er I  
quit

Thy will : what silence hides, that knowest  
thou."

Thereat on the fourth pier we came, we  
turn'd,

And on our left descended to the depth,  
A narrow strait, and, perforated close.

Nor from his side my leader set me down,  
 Till to his orifice he brought, whose limb  
 Quivering express'd his pang. " Whoe'er thou art,<sup>14</sup>

Sad Spirit ! thus reversed, and as a stake  
 Driven in the soil," I in these words began ;  
 " If thou be able, utter forth thy voice."

There stood I like the friar, that doth shrive  
 A wretch for murder doom'd, who, e'en when  
 fix'd,

Calleth him back, whence death awhile delays.

He shouted : " Ha ! already standest there ?  
 Already standest there, O Boniface ! <sup>1</sup>  
 By many a year the writing play'd me false.  
 So early dost thou surfeit with the wealth,  
 For which thou fearedst not in guile <sup>2</sup> to take  
 The lovely lady, and then mangle her ? "

I felt as those who, piercing not the drift  
 Of answer made them, stand as if exposed  
 In mockery, nor know what to reply ;  
 When Virgil thus admonish'd : " Tell him  
 quick,

' I am not he, not he whom thou believest.'

<sup>1</sup> *O Boniface !*] The spirit mistakes, Dante for Boniface VIII, who was then alive ; and who he did not expect would have arrived so soon, in consequence, as it should seem, of a prophecy, which predicted the death of that pope at a later period. Boniface died in 1303.

<sup>2</sup> *In guile.*] " Thou didst presume to arrive by fraudulent means at the papal power, and afterwards to abuse it."

And I, as was enjoin'd me, straight replied.  
That heard, the spirit all did wrench his  
feet,

And, sighing, next in woeful accent spake :  
“ What then of me requirest ? If to know  
So much imports thee, who I am, that thou  
Hast therefore down the bank descended, learn  
That in the mighty mantle I was robed,<sup>1</sup>  
And of a she-bear was indeed the son,  
So eager to advance my whelps, that there  
My having in my purse above I stow'd,  
And here myself. Under my head are dragg'd  
The rest, my predecessors in the guilt  
Of simony. Stretch'd at their length, they lie  
Along an opening in the rock. 'Midst them  
I also low shall fall, soon as he comes,  
For whom I took thee, when so hastily  
I question'd. But already longer time  
Hath past, since my soles kindled, and I thus  
Upturn'd have stood, than is his doom to  
stand

Planted with fiery feet. For after him,  
One yet of deeds more ugly shall arrive,  
From forth the west, a shepherd without law,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *In the mighty mantle I was robed.]* Nicholas III of the Orsini family, whom the Poet therefore calls “ figliuol dell' orsa,” “ son of the she-bear.” He died in 1281.

<sup>2</sup> *From forth the west, a shepherd without law.]* Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bourdeaux, who succeeded to the

Fated to cover both his form and mine.  
 He a new Jason<sup>1</sup> shall be call'd, of whom  
 In Maccabees we read ; and favour such  
 As to that priest his king indulgent show'd,  
 Shall be of France's monarch<sup>2</sup> shown to him."

I know not if I here too far presumed,  
 But in this strain I answer'd : " Tell me now,  
 What treasures from Saint Peter at the first  
 Our Lord demanded, when he put the keys  
 Into his charge ? Surely he ask'd no more  
 But ' Follow me ! ' Nor Peter,<sup>3</sup> nor the rest,  
 Or gold or silver of Matthias took,  
 When lots were cast upon the forfeit place  
 Of the condemned soul.<sup>4</sup> Abide thou then ;  
 Thy punishment of right is merited :  
 And look thou well to that ill-gotten coin,  
 Which against Charles<sup>5</sup> thy hardihood in-  
 spired.

pontificate in 1305, and assumed the title of Clement V. He transferred the holy see to Avignon in 1308 (where it remained till 1376), and died in 1314.

<sup>1</sup> *A new Jason.*] " But after the death of Seleucus, when Antiochus, called Epiphanes, took the kingdom, Jason, the brother of Onias, laboured underhand to be high priest, promising unto the king, by intercession, three hundred and threescore talents of silver, and of another revenue eighty talents." <sup>2</sup> *Maccab.* iv. 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Of France's monarch.*] Philip IV of France.

<sup>3</sup> *Nor Peter.*] *Acts of the Apostles*, i. 26.

<sup>4</sup> *The condemned soul.*] Judas.

<sup>5</sup> *Against Charles.*] Nicholas III was enraged against Charles I. King of Sicily, because he rejected with scorn

If reverence of the keys restrain'd me not,  
 Which thou in happier time didst hold, I yet  
 Severer speech might use. Your avarice  
 O'ercasts the world with mourning, under foot  
 Treading the good, and raising bad men up.  
 Of shepherds like to you, the Evangelist <sup>1</sup>  
 Was ware, when her, who sits upon the waves,  
 With kings in filthy whoredom he beheld ;  
 She who with seven heads tower'd at her birth,  
 And from ten horns her proof of glory drew,  
 Long as her spouse in virtue took delight.  
 Of gold and silver ye have made your god,  
 Differing wherein from the idolater,

But that he worships one, a hundred ye ?  
 Ah, Constantine ! <sup>2</sup> to how much ill gave birth,  
 Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower,  
 Which the first wealthy Father gain'd from  
 thee."

Meanwhile, as thus I sung, he, whether wrath  
 Or conscience smote him, violent upsprang  
 Spinning on either sole. I do believe  
 My teacher well was pleased, with so composed  
 A lip he listen'd ever to the sound

a proposition made by that pope for an alliance between their families. See G. Villani, *Hist.* lib. 7. cap. liv.

<sup>1</sup> *The Evangelist.] Revelation, xvii. 1, 2, 3.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ah, Constantine !]* He alludes to the pretended gift of the Lateran by Constantine to Sylvester, of which Dante himself seems to imply a doubt, in his treatise *De Monarchia*.

Of the true words I utter'd. In both arms  
He caught, and, to his bosom lifting me,  
Upward retraced the way of his descent.

Nor weary of his weight, he press'd me close,  
Till to the summit of the rock we came,  
Our passage from the fourth to the fifth pier.  
His cherish'd burden there gently he placed  
Upon the rugged rock and steep, a path  
Not easy for the clambering goat to mount.

Thence to my view another vale appear'd.

## CANTO XX

### Argument.

The Poet relates the punishment of such as presumed, while living, to predict future events. It is to have their faces reversed and set the contrary way on their limbs, so that, being deprived of the power to see before them, they are constrained ever to walk backwards. Among these Virgil points out to him Amphiaraüs, Tiresias, Aruns, and Manto (from the mention of whom he takes occasion to speak of the origin of Mantua), together with several others, who had practised the arts of divination and astrology.

AND now the verse proceeds to torments new,  
Fit argument of this the twentieth strain  
Of the first song, whose awful theme records  
The spirits whelm'd in woe. Earnest I look'd  
Into the depth, that open'd to my view,  
Moisten'd with tears of anguish, and beheld  
A tribe, that came along the hollow vale,  
In silence weeping : such their step as walk

Quires, chanting solemn litanies, on earth.

As on them more direct mine eye descends,  
Each wondrously seem'd to be reversed  
At the neck-bone, so that the countenance  
Was from the reins averted ; and because  
None might before him look, they were com-  
pell'd

To advance with backward gait. Thus one per-  
haps

Hath been by force of palsy clean transposed,  
But I ne'er saw it nor believe it so.

Now, reader ! think within thyself, so God  
Fruit of thy reading give thee ! how I long  
Could keep my visage dry, when I beheld  
Near me our form distorted in such guise,  
That on the hinder parts fallen from the face  
The tears down-streaming roll'd. Against a rock  
I leant and wept, so that my guide exclaim'd :  
" What, and art thou, too, witless as the rest ?  
Here pity most doth show herself alive,  
When she is dead. What guilt exceedeth his,  
Who with Heaven's judgment in his passion  
strives ?

Raise up thy head, raise up, and see the man  
Before whose eyes <sup>1</sup> earth gaped in Thebes,  
when all

<sup>1</sup> Before whose eyes.] Amphiaraüs, one of the seven

Cried out ‘ Amphiaraüs, whither rushest ?  
 Why leavest thou the war ? ’ He not the less  
 Fell ruining far as to Minos down,  
 Whose grapple none eludes. Lo ! how he  
 makes

The breast his shoulders ; and who once too far  
 Before him wish’d to see, now backward looks,  
 And treads reverse his path. Tiresias note,  
 Who semblance changed, when woman he be-  
 came

Of male, through every limb transform’d ; and  
 then,

Once more behoved him with his rod to strike  
 The two entwining serpents, ere the plumes,  
 That mark’d the better sex, might shoot again.

“ Aruns, <sup>1</sup> with rere his belly facing, comes.  
 On Luni’s mountains ’midst the marbles white,  
 Where delves Carrara’s hind, who wons be-  
 neath,

A cavern was his dwelling, whence the stars  
 And main-sea wide in boundless view he held.

“ The next, whose loosend tresses over-  
 spread

kings who besieged Thebes. He is said to have been swallowed up by an opening of the earth.

<sup>1</sup> *Aruns.*] Aruns is said to have dwelt in the mountains of Luni (from whence that territory is still called Luni-giana), above Carrara, celebrated for its marble. Lucan, *Phars.* lib. i. 575.

Her bosom, which thou seest not (for each hair  
On that side grows) was Manto,<sup>1</sup> she who  
search'd

Through many regions, and at length her seat  
Fix'd in my native land : whence a short space  
My words detain thy audience. When her sire  
From life departed, and in servitude  
The city dedicate to Bacchus mourn'd,  
Long time she went a wanderer through the  
world.

Aloft in Italy's delightful land  
A lake there lies, at foot of that proud Alp  
That o'er the Tryol locks Germania in,  
Its name Benacus, from whose ample breast  
A thousand springs, methinks, and more, be-  
tween

Camonica <sup>2</sup> and Garda, issuing forth,

<sup>1</sup> *Manto.*] The daughter of Tiresias of Thebes, a city dedicated to Bacchus. From Manto, Mantua, the country of Virgil, derives its name. The Poet proceeds to describe the situation of that place. But see the note to *Purgatorio*, Canto xxii. v. 112.

<sup>2</sup> *Camonica.*] Lombardi, instead of  
Fra Garda e val Camonica e Apennino,  
reads

Fra Garda e val Camonica Pennino,  
from the Nidobeatina edition (to which he might have added that of Vellutello in 1544), and two MSS., all of which omit the second conjunction, the only part of the alteration that affects the sense. I have re-translated the passage, which in the former editions stood thus :

— which a thousand rills  
Methinks, and more, water between the vale

Water the Apennine. There is a spot <sup>1</sup>  
 At midway of that lake, where he who bears  
 Of Trento's flock the pastoral staff, with him  
 Of Brescia, and the Veronese, might each  
 Passing that way his benediction give.  
 A garrison of goodly site and strong  
 Peschiera <sup>2</sup> stands, to awe with front opposed  
 The Bergamese and Brescian, whence the shore  
 More slope each way descends. There, what-  
 soe'er

Benacus' bosom holds not, tumbling o'er  
 Down falls, and winds a river flood beneath  
 Through the green pastures. Soon as in its  
 course

The stream makes head, Benacus then no more  
 They call the name, but Mincius, till at last  
 Reaching Governo, into Po he falls.

Not far his course hath run, when a wide flat  
 It finds, which overstretching as a marsh

Camonica and Garda, and the height  
 Of Apennine remote.

It should be added, that Vellutello reads " Valdimonica " for " Val Camonica ; " but which of these is right remains to be determined by a collation of editions and MSS., and still more perhaps by a view of the country in the neighbourhood of the lake (now called the Lago di Garda,) with a reference to this passage.

<sup>1</sup> *There is a spot.]* Prato di Fame, where the dioceses of Trento, Verona, and Brescia meet.

<sup>2</sup> *Peschiera.]* A garrison situated to the south of the lake, where it empties itself and forms the Mincius.

It covers, pestilent in summer oft.  
 Hence journeying, the savage maiden saw  
 Midst of the fen a territory waste  
 And naked of inhabitants. To shun  
 All human converse, here she with her slaves,  
 Plying her arts, remain'd, and lived, and left  
 Her body tenantless. Thenceforth the tribes  
 Who round were scatter'd, gathering to that  
 place,  
 Assembled ; for its strength was great, en-  
 closed  
 On all parts by the fen. On those dead bones  
 They rear'd themselves a city, for her sake  
 Calling it Mantua, who first chose the spot,  
 Nor ask'd another omen for the name ;  
 Wherein more numerous the people dwelt,  
 Ere Casalodi's madness <sup>1</sup> by deceit  
 Was wrong'd of Pinamonte. If thou hear  
 Henceforth another origin <sup>2</sup> assign'd

<sup>1</sup> *Casalodi's madness.*] Alberto da Casalodi, who had got possession of Mantua, was persuaded, by Pinamonte Buonacossi, that he might ingratiate himself with the people, by banishing to their own castles the nobles, who were obnoxious to them. No sooner was this done, than Pinamonte put himself at the head of the populace, drove out Casalodi and his adherents, and obtained the sovereignty for himself.

<sup>2</sup> *Another origin.*] Lombardi refers to Servius on the Tenth Book of the *Aeneid*. Alii a Tarchone Tyrreni fratre conditam dicunt Mantuam autem ideo nominatam quia Etrusca lingua Mantum ditem patrem appellant.

Of that my country, I forewarn thee now,  
 That falsehood none beguile thee of the  
 truth."

I answer'd, " Teacher, I conclude thy words  
 So certain, that all else shall be to me  
 As embers lacking life. But now of these,  
 Who here proceed, instruct me, if thou see  
 Any that merit more especial note.  
 For thereon is my mind alone intent."

He straight replied : " That spirit, from  
 whose cheek  
 The beard sweeps o'er his shoulders brown,  
 what time  
 Græcia was emptied of her males, that scarce  
 The cradles were supplied, the seer was he  
 In Aulis, who with Calchas gave the sign  
 When first to cut the cable. Him they named  
 Eurypilus : so sings my tragic strain,  
 In which majestic measure well thou know'st,  
 Who know'st it all. That other, round the  
 loins

So slender of his shape, was Michael Scot,<sup>1</sup>  
 Practised in every slight of magic wile.

<sup>1</sup> *Michael Scot.*] " Egli non ha ancora guarì, che in questa città fu un gran maestro in negromanzia, il quale ebbe nome Michele Scotto, perciò che di Scozia era." Boccaccio, *Dec. Giorn.* viii. Nov. 9. " It is not long since there was in this city (Florence) a great master in necromancy, who was called Michele Scotto, because he was from Scotland."

" Guido Bonatti <sup>1</sup> see : Asdente <sup>2</sup> mark,  
 Who now were willing he had tended still  
 The thread and cordwain, and too late repents.

" See next the wretches, who the needle left,  
 The shuttle and the spindle, and became  
 Diviners : baneful witcheries they wrought  
 With images and herbs. But onward now :  
 For now doth Cain with fork of thorns <sup>3</sup> confine  
 On either hemisphere, touching the wave  
 Beneath the towers of Seville. Yesternight  
 The moon was round. Thou mayst remember  
 well :

<sup>1</sup> *Guido Bonatti.*] An astrologer of Forli, on whose skill Guido da Montefeltro, lord of that place, so much relied, that he is reported never to have gone into battle, except in the hour recommended to him as fortunate by Bonatti. Landino and Vellutello speak of a book which he composed on the subject of his art. Macchiavelli mentions him in the *History of Florence*, lib. i. p. 24, ed. 1550. " He flourished about 1230 and 1260. Though a learned astronomer, he was seduced by astrology, through which he was greatly in favour with many princes of that time. His many works are miserably spoiled by it." Bettinelli, *Risorgimento d'Italia*, t. i. p. 118, 8vo, 1786.

<sup>2</sup> *Asdente.*] A shoemaker at Parma, who deserted his business to practise the arts of divination. How much this man had attracted the public notice appears from a passage in our author's *Convito*, p. 179, where it is said, in speaking of the derivation of the word " noble," that " if those who were best known were accounted the most noble, Asdente, the shoemaker of Parma, would be more noble than any one in that city."

<sup>3</sup> *Cain with fork of thorns.*] By Cain and the thorns, or what is still vulgarly called the Man in the Moon, the Poet denotes that luminary. The same superstition is alluded to in the *Paradiso*, Canto ii. 52.

For she good service did thee in the gloom  
Of the deep wood." This said, both onward  
moved.

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## CANTO XXI

## Argument.

Still in the eighth circle, which bears the name of Malebolge, they look down from the bridge that passes over its fifth gulf, upon the barterers or public peculators. These are plunged in a lake of boiling pitch, guarded by Demons, to whom Virgil, leaving Dante apart, presents himself; and license being obtained to pass onward, both pursue their way.

THUS we from bridge to bridge, with other talk,  
The which my drama cares not to rehearse,  
Pass'd on ; and to the summit reaching, stood  
To view another gap, within the round  
Of Malebolge, other bootless pangs.

Marvellous darkness shadow'd o'er the place.  
In the Venetians' arsenal as boils  
Through wintry months tenacious pitch, to  
smear

Their unsound vessels ; for the inclement time  
Seafaring men restrains, and in that while  
His bark one builds anew, another stops  
The ribs of his that hath made many a voyage,  
One hammers at the prow, one at the poop,  
This shapeth oars, that other cables twirls,  
The mizen one repairs, and mainsail rent ;

So, not by force of fire but art divine,  
 Boil'd here a glutinous thick mass, that round  
 Limed all the shore beneath. I that beheld,  
 But therein naught distinguish'd, save the  
 bubbles

Raised by the boiling, and one mighty swell  
 Heave, and by turns subsiding fall. While there  
 I fix'd my ken below, "Mark ! mark !" my  
 guide

Exclaiming, drew me towards him from the  
 place

Wherein I stood. I turn'd myself, as one  
 Impatient to behold that which beheld  
 He needs must shun, whom sudden fear unmans,  
 That he his flight delays not for the view.  
 Behind me I discern'd a devil black,  
 That running up advanced along the rock.  
 Ah ! what fierce cruelty his look bespoke.  
 In act how bitter did he seem, with wings  
 Buoyant outstretch'd and feet of nimblest tread.  
 His shoulder proudly eminent and sharp,  
 Was with a sinner charged ; by either haunch  
 He held him, the foot's sinew griping fast.

"Ye of our bridge !" he cried, "keen talon'd  
 fiends !

Lo ! one of Santa Zita's elders.<sup>1</sup> Him

---

<sup>1</sup> One of Santa Zita's elders.] The elders or chief magistrates of Lucca, where Santa Zita was held in especial

Whelm ye beneath, while I return for more.  
That land hath store of such. All men are  
there,

Except Bontura, barterers : <sup>1</sup> of ‘ no ’  
For lucre there an ‘ ay ’ is quickly made.”

Him dashing down, o’er the rough rock he  
turn’d ;

Nor ever after thief a mastiff loosed  
Sped with like eager haste. The other sank,  
And forthwith writhing to the surface rose.  
But those dark demons, shrouded by the bridge  
Cried, “ Here the hallow’d visage <sup>2</sup> saves not :  
here

Is other swimming than in Serchio’s wave,<sup>3</sup>  
Wherefore, if thou desire we rend thee not,  
Take heed thou mount not o’er the pitch.”

This said,

They grappled him with more than hundred  
hooks,

And shouted : “ Cover’d thou must sport thee  
here ;

veneration. The name of this sinner is supposed to have been Martino Botaio.

<sup>1</sup> *Except Bonturo, barterers.]* This is said ironically of Bonturo de’ Dati. By *barterers* are meant peculators, of every description ; all who traffic the interests of the public for their own private advantage.

<sup>2</sup> *The hallow’d visage.]* A representation of the head of our Saviour worshipped at Lucca.

<sup>3</sup> *Is other swimming than in Serchio’s wave.]* Serchio is the river that flows by Lucca.

So, if thou canst, in secret mayst thou filch." E'en thus the cook bestirs him, with his grooms, To thrust the flesh into the caldron down With flesh hooks, that it float not on the top.

Me then my guide bespeak : " Lest they descry

That thou art here, behind a craggy rock Bend low and skreen thee : and whate'er of force

Be offer'd me, or insult fear thou not ; For I am well advised, who have been erst In the like fray." Beyond the bridge's head Therewith he pass'd ; and reaching the sixth pier,

Behoved him then a forehead terror-proof.

With storm and fury, as when dogs rush forth

Upon the poor man's back, who suddenly From whence he standeth makes his suit ; so rush'd

Those from beneath the arch, and against him Their weapons all they pointed. He aloud : " Be none of you outrageous : ere your tine Dare seize me, come forth from amongst you one,

Who having heard my words, decide he then If he shall tear these limbs." They shouted loud,

" Go, Malacoda ! " Whereat one advanced,  
The others standing firm, and as he came,  
" What may this turn avail him ? " he ex-  
claimed

" Believest thou, Malacoda ! I had come  
Thus far from all your skirmishing secure,"  
My teacher answer'd, " without will divine  
And destiny propitious ? Pass we then ;  
For so Heaven's pleasure is, that I should lead  
Another through this savage wilderness."

Forthwith so fell his pride, that he let drop  
The instrument of torture at his feet,  
And to the rest exclaim'd : " We have no  
power

To strike him." Then to me my guide : " O  
thou !

Who on the bridge among the crags dost sit  
Low crouching, safely now to me return."

I rose, and towards him moved with speed ;  
the fiends

Meantime all forward drew ; me terror seized,  
Lest they should break the compact they had  
made.

Thus issuing from Caprona,<sup>1</sup> once I saw  
Th' infantry, dreading lest his covenant

<sup>1</sup> *From Caprona.*] The surrender of the castle of Caprona to the combined forces of Florence and Lucca, on condition that the garrison should march out in safety, to which event Dante was a witness, took place in 1290.

The foe should break ; so close he hemm'd  
them round.

I to my leader's side adhered, mine eyes  
With fixt and motionless observance bent  
On their unkindly visage. They their hooks  
Protruding, one the other thus bespake :  
“ Wilt thou I touch him on the hip ? ” To  
whom  
Was answer'd : “ Even so ; nor miss thy  
aim.”

But he, who was in conference with my guide  
Turn'd rapid round ; and thus the demon  
spake :

“ Stay, stay thee, Scarmiglione ! ” Then to us  
He added : “ Further footing to your step  
This rock affords not, shiver'd to the base  
Of the sixth arch. But would ye still proceed,  
Up by this cavern go : not distant far,  
Another rock will yield you passage safe.  
Yesterday <sup>1</sup> later by five hours than now,  
Twelve hundred threescore years and six had  
fill'd

<sup>1</sup> *Yesterday.]* This passage fixes the era of Dante's descent at Good Friday, in the year 1300 (34 years from our blessed Lord's incarnation being added to 1266), and at the thirty-fifth year of our Poet's age. See Canto i. v. l. The awful event alluded to, the Evangelists inform us, happened “at the ninth hour,” that is, our sixth, when “the rocks were rent,” and the convulsion, according to Dante, was felt even in the depths of Hell.

The circuit of their course, since here the way  
 Was broken. Thitherward I straight dispatch  
 Certain of these my scouts, who shall esp<sup>y</sup>  
 If any on the surface bask. With them  
 Go ye : for ye shall find them nothing fell.  
 Come Alichino, forth," with that he cried,  
 " And Calcabrina, and Cagnazzo thou !  
 The troop of ten let Barbariccia lead.  
 With Libicocco, Draghinazzo haste,  
 Fang'd Ciriatto, Graffiacane fierce,  
 And Farfarello, and mad Rubicant.  
 Search ye around the bubbling tar. For these,  
 In safety lead them, where the other crag  
 Uninterrupted traverses the dens."

I then : " O Master ! what a sight is there.  
 Ah ! without escort, journey we alone,  
 Which, if thou know the way, I covet not.  
 Unless thy prudence fail thee, dost not mark  
 How they do gnarl upon us, and their scowl  
 Threatens us present tortures ? " He replied :  
 " I charge thee, fear not : let them, as they will,  
 Gnarl on : 'tis but in token of their spite  
 Against the souls who mourn in torment  
 steep'd."

To leftward o'er the pier they turn'd ; but  
 each  
 Had first between his teeth prest close the  
 tongue,

Toward their leader for a signal looking,  
Which he with sound obscene triumphant gave.

## CANTO XXII

## Argument,

Virgil and Dante proceed, accompanied by the Demons, and see other sinners of the same description in the same gulf. The device of Ciampolo, one of these, to escape from the Demons, who had laid hold on him.

IT hath been heretofore my chance to see  
Horsemen with martial order shifting camp,  
To onset sallying, or in muster ranged,  
Or in retreat sometimes outstretch'd for flight :  
Light armed squadrons and fleet foragers  
Scouring thy plains, Arezzo ! have I seen,  
And clashing tournaments, and tilting jousts,  
Now with the sound of trumpets, now of bells,  
Tabors,<sup>1</sup> or signals made from castled heights,  
And with inventions multiform, our own,  
Or introduced from foreign land ; but ne'er  
To such a strange recorder I beheld,  
In evolution moving, horse nor foot,

<sup>1</sup> *Tabors.*] “ Tabour, a drum, a common accompaniment of war, is mentioned as one of the instruments of martial music in this battle (in Richard Cœur de Lion) with characteristical propriety. It was imported into the European armies from the Saracens in the holy war. Joinville describes a superb bark or galley belonging to a Saracen chief, which, he says, was filled with cymbals, tabours, and Saracen horns. *Hist. de S. Loys*, p. 30.” Warton’s *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, vol. i. sec. 4, p. 167.

Nor ship, that tack'd by sign from land or star.

With the ten demons on our way we went ;  
Ah, fearful company ! but in the church  
With saints, with gluttons at the tavern's mess.

Still earnest on the pitch I gazed, to mark  
All things whate'er the chasm contain'd,<sup>1</sup> and  
those

Who burn'd within. As dolphins that, in sign  
To mariners, heave high their arched backs,  
That thence forewarn'd they may advise to  
save

Their threaten'd vessel ; so, at intervals,  
To ease the pain, his back some sinner show'd,  
Then hid more nimbly than the lightning  
glance.

E'en as the frogs, that of a watery moat  
Stand at the brink, with the jaws only out,  
Their feet and of the trunk all else conceal'd,  
Thus on each part the sinners stood ; but soon  
As Barbariccia was at hand, so they  
Drew back under the wave. I saw, and yet  
My heart doth stagger, one, that waited thus,  
As it befalls that oft one frog remains,  
While the next springs away : and Graffiacan,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Whate'er the chasm contain'd.] Monti, in his *Proposta*, interprets "contegno" to mean, not "contents" but "state," "condition."

<sup>2</sup> Graffiacan.] Fuseli, in a note to his third Lecture, observes, that "the Minos of Dante, in Messer Biagio da Cesena, and his Charon, have been recognized by all ; but

Who of the fiends was nearest, grappling seized  
 His clotted locks, and dragg'd him sprawling up,  
 That he appear'd to me an otter. Each  
 Already by their names I knew, so well  
 When they were chosen I observ'd, and mark'd  
 How one the other call'd. "O Rubicant !  
 See that his hide thou with thy talons flay,"  
 Shouted together all the cursed crew.

Then I : " Inform thee, Master ! if thou may,  
 What wretched soul is this, on whom their  
 hands

His foes have laid." My leader to his side  
 Approach'd, and whence he came inquired ; to  
 whom  
 Was answer'd thus : " Born in Navarre's  
 domain,<sup>1</sup>

My mother placed me in a lord's retinue ;  
 For she had borne me to a losel vile,  
 A spendthrift of his substance and himself.  
 The good king Thibault <sup>2</sup> after that I served :

---

less the shivering wretch held over the barge by a hook,  
 and evidently taken from this passage." He is speaking  
 of Michael Angelo's Last Judgment.

<sup>1</sup> *Born in Navarre's domain.*] The name of this pecu-  
 lator is said to have been Ciampolo.

<sup>2</sup> *The good king Thibault.*] "Thibault I, king of Navarre, died on the 8th of June, 1233, as much to be commended for the desire he showed of aiding the war in the Holy Land, as reprehensible and faulty for his design of oppressing the rights and privileges of the church ; on which account it is said that the whole kingdom was under an interdict for the space of three entire years.—Thibault

To peculating here my thoughts were turn'd,  
Whereof I give account in this dire heat."

Straight Ciriatto, from whose mouth a tusk  
Issued on either side, as from a boar,  
Ripp'd him with one of these. 'Twixt evil claws  
The mouse had fallen : but Barbariccia cried  
Seizing him with both arms : "Stand thou  
apart,

While I do fix him on my prong transpierced."  
Then added, turning to my guide his face,  
"Inquire of him, if more thou wish to learn,  
Ere he again be rent." My leader thus :

"Then tell us of the partners in thy guilt ;  
Knowest thou any sprung of Latian land  
Under the tar ?"—"I parted," he replied,  
"But now from one, who sojourn'd not far  
thence ;

So were I under shelter now with him,  
Nor hook nor talon then should scare me more."

"Too long we suffer," Libicocco cried ;  
Then, darting forth a prong, seized on his arm,  
And mangled bore away the sinewy part.

---

undoubtedly merits praise, as for his other endowments, so especially for his cultivation of the liberal arts, his exercise and knowledge of music and poetry, in which he so much excelled, that he was accustomed to compose verses and sing them to the viol, and to exhibit his poetical compositions publicly in his palace that they might be criticized by all." Mariana, *History of Spain*, b. 13. cap. 15.

Him Draghinazzo by his thighs beneath  
 Would next have caught ; whence angrily their  
 chief,  
 Turning on all sides round, with threatening  
 brow  
 Restrain'd them. When their strife a little  
 ceased,  
 Of him, who yet was gazing on his wound,  
 My teacher thus without delay inquired :  
 " Who was the spirit, from whom by evil hap  
 Parting, as thou hast told, thou camest to  
 shore ? "—

" It was the friar Gomita,"<sup>1</sup> he rejoin'd,  
 " He of Gallura, vessel of all guile,  
 Who had his master's enemies in hand,  
 And used them so that they commend him well.  
 Money he took, and them at large dismiss'd ;  
 So he reports ; and in each other charge  
 Committed to his keeping play'd the part  
 Of barterer to the height. With him doth herd  
 The chief of Logodoro, Michel Zanche.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The friar Gomita.*] He was intrusted by Nino de' Visconti with the government of Gallura, one of the four jurisdictions into which Sardinia was divided. Having his master's enemies in his power, he took a bribe from them, and allowed them to escape. Mention of Nino will recur in the Notes to Canto xxxiii, and in the *Purgatorio*, Canto viii.

<sup>2</sup> *Michel Zanche.*] The president of Logodoro, another of the four Sardinian jurisdictions. See Canto xxxiii. Note to v. 136.

Sardinia is a theme whereof their tongue  
 Is never weary. Out ! alas ! behold  
 That other, how he grins. More would I say,  
 But tremble lest he mean to maul me sore."

Their captain then to Farfarello turning,  
 Who roll'd his moony eyes in act to strike,  
 Rebuked him thus : " Off, cursed bird !  
 avaunt ! "

" If ye desire to see or hear," he thus  
 Quaking with dread resumed, " or Tuscan  
 spirits

Or Lombard, I will cause them to appear.  
 Meantime let these ill talons bate their fury,  
 So that no vengeance they may fear from them,  
 And I, remaining in this self-same place,  
 Will, for myself but one, make seven appear,  
 When my shrill whistle shall be heard ; for so  
 Our custom is to call each other up."

Cagnazzo at that word deriding grinn'd,  
 Then wagg'd the head and spake : " Hear his  
 device,

Mischievous as he is, to plunge him down."

Whereto he thus, who fail'd not in rich store  
 Of nice-wove toils : " Mischief, forsooth, ex-  
 treme !

Meant only to procure myself more woe."

No longer Alichino then refrain'd,  
 But thus, the rest gainsaying, him bespake :

" If thou do cast thee down, I not on foot  
 Will chase thee, but above the pitch will beat  
 My plumes. Quit we the vantage ground, and  
 let

The bank be as a shield ; that we may see,  
 If singly thou prevail against us all."

Now, reader, of new sport expect to hear.  
 They each one turn'd his eyes to the other  
 shore,

He first, who was the hardest to persuade.  
 The spirit of Navarre chose well his time,  
 Planted his feet on land, and at one leap  
 Escaping, disappointed their resolve.

Them quick resentment stung, but him the  
 most,  
 Who was the cause of failure : in pursuit  
 He therefore sped, exclaiming, " Thou art  
 caught."

But little it avail'd ; terror outstripp'd  
 His following flight ; the other plunged beneath,  
 And he with upward pinion raised his breast :  
 E'en thus the water-fowl, when she perceives  
 The falcon near, dives instant down, while he  
 Enraged and spent retires. That mockery  
 In Calcabrina fury stirr'd, who flew  
 After him, with desire of strife inflamed :  
 And, for the barterer had 'scaped, so turn'd  
 His talons on his comrade. O'er the dyke

In grapple close they join'd ; but the other  
proved

A goshawk able to rend well his foe ;  
And in the boiling lake both fell. The heat  
Was umpire soon between them ; but in vain  
To lift themselves they strove, so fast were  
glued

Their pennons. Barbariccia, as the rest,  
That chance lamenting, four in flight dispatch'd  
From the other coast, with all their weapons  
arm'd.

They, to their post on each side speedily  
Descending, stretch'd their hooks toward the  
fiends,

Who flounder'd, inly burning from their scars :  
And we departing left them to that broil.

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## CANTO XXIII

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### Argument.

The enraged Demons pursue Dante, but he is preserved from them by Virgil. On reaching the sixth gulf, he beholds the punishment of the hypocrites ; which is, to pace continually round the gulf under the pressure of caps and hoods, that are gilt on the outside, but leaden within. He is addressed by two of these, Catalano and Loderingo, knights of Saint Mary, otherwise called Joyous Friars of Bologna. Caaphas is seen fixed to a cross on the ground, and lies so stretched along the way, that all tread on him in passing.

IN silence and in solitude we went,  
One first, the other following his steps,

As minor friars journeying on their road.

The present fray had turn'd my thoughts to  
muse

Upon old Æsop's fable,<sup>1</sup> where he told  
What fate unto the mouse and frog befel ;  
For language hath not sounds more like in sense,  
Than are these chances, if the origin  
And end of each be heedfully compared.  
And as one thought bursts from another forth,  
So afterward from that another sprang,  
Which added doubly to my former fear.  
For thus I reason'd : " These through us have  
been

So foil'd, with loss and mockery so complete,  
As needs must sting them sore. If anger then  
Be to their evil will conjoin'd, more fell  
They shall pursue us, than the savage hound  
Snatches the leveret panting 'twixt his jaws."

Already I perceived my hair stand all  
On end with terror, and look'd eager back.

" Teacher," I thus began, " if speedily  
Thyself and me thou hide not, much I dread  
Those evil talons. Even now behind  
They urge us ; quick imagination works

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<sup>1</sup> *Æsop's fable.*] The fable of the frog, who offered to carry the mouse across a ditch, with the intention of drowning him, when both were carried off by a kite. It is not among those Greek fables which go under the name of *Æsop*.

So forcibly, that I already feel them."

He answer'd: " Were I form'd of leaded  
glass,

I should not sooner draw unto myself  
Thy outward image, than I now imprint  
That from within. This moment came thy  
thoughts

Presented before mine, with similar act  
And countenance similar, so that from both  
I one design have framed. If the right coast  
Incline so much, that we may thence descend  
Into the other chasm, we shall escape  
Secure from this imagined pursuit."

He had not spoke his purpose to the end,  
When I from far beheld them with spread wings  
Approach to take us. Suddenly my guide  
Caught me, even as a mother that from sleep  
Is by the noise aroused, and near her sees  
The climbing fires, who snatches up her babe  
And flies ne'er pausing, careful more of him  
Than of herself, that but a single vest  
Clings round her limbs. Down from the jutting  
beach

Supine he cast him to that pendent rock.  
Which closes on one part the other chasm.

Never ran water with such hurrying pace  
Adown the tube to turn a land-mill's wheel,  
When nearest it approaches to the spokes,

As then along that edge my master ran,  
 Carrying me in his bosom, as a child,  
 Not a companion. Scarcely had his feet  
 Reach'd to the lowest of the bed beneath,  
 When over us the steep they reach'd : but fear  
 In him was none ; for that high Providence,  
 Which placed them ministers of the fifth foss,  
 Power of departing thence took from them all.

There in the depth we saw a painted tribe,  
 Who paced with tardy steps around, and wept,  
 Faint in appearance and o'ercome with toil.  
 Caps had they on, with hoods, that fell low  
 down

Before their eyes, in fashion like to those  
 Worn by the monks in Cologne.<sup>1</sup> Their out-  
 side

Was overlaid with gold, dazzling to view,  
 But leaden all within, and of such weight,  
 That Frederick's<sup>2</sup> compared to these were straw.  
 Oh, everlasting wearisome attire !

We yet once more with them together turn'd  
 To leftward, on their dismal moan intent.  
 But by the weight opprest, so slowly came  
 The fainting people, that our company

<sup>1</sup> *Monks in Cologne.*] They wore their cowls unusually large.

<sup>2</sup> *Frederick's.*] The Emperor Frederick II is said to have punished those who were guilty of high treason by wrapping them up in lead, and casting them into a furnace.

Was changed, at every movement of the step.

Whence I my guide address'd : " See that thou find

Some spirit, whose name may by his deeds be known ;

And to that end look round thee as thou go'st,"

Then one, who understood the Tuscan voice,  
Cried after us aloud : " Hold in your feet,  
Ye who so swiftly speed through the dusk air.  
Perchance from me thou shalt obtain thy wish."

Whereat my leader, turning, me bespeak :  
" Pause, and then onward at their pace proceed."

I staid, and saw two spirits in whose look  
Impatient eagerness of mind was mark'd  
To overtake me ; but the load they bare  
And narrow path retarded their approach.

Soon as arrived, they with an eye askance  
Perused me, but spake not : then turning, each  
To other thus conferring said : " This one  
Seems, by the action of his throat, alive ;  
And, be they dead, what privilege allows  
They walk unmantled by the cumbrous stole ? "

Then thus to me : " Tuscan, who visitest  
The college of the mourning hypocrites,  
Disdain not to instruct us who thou art."

" By Arno's pleasant, stream " I thus replied,  
" In the great city I was bred and grew,

And wear the body I have ever worn.  
But who are ye, from whom such mighty grief,  
As now I witness, courseth down your cheeks ?  
What torment breaks forth in this bitter woe ? ”

“ Our bonnets gleaming bright with orange  
hue,”<sup>1</sup>

One of them answer’d, “ are so leaden gross  
That with their weight they make the balances  
To crack beneath them. Joyous friars<sup>2</sup> we  
were,

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<sup>1</sup> *Our bonnets gleaming bright with orange hue.]* It is observed by Venturi, that the word “ rance ” does not here signify “ rancid or disgusting,” as it is explained by the old commentators, but “ orange coloured,” in which sense it occurs in the *Purgatorio*, Canto ii. 9. By the erroneous interpretation Milton appears to have been misled : “ Ever since the day peepe, till now the sun was grown somewhat ranke.” Prose Works, vol. i. p. 160, ed. 1753.

<sup>2</sup> *Joyous friars.]* “ Those who ruled the city of Florence on the part of the Ghibellines perceiving this discontent and murmuring, which they were fearful might produce a rebellion against themselves, in order to satisfy the people, made choice of two knights, Frati Godenti (joyous friars) of Bologna, on whom they conferred the chief power in Florence ; one named M. Catalano de’ Malavolti, the other M. Loderingo di Liandolo ; one an adherent of the Guelph, the other of the Ghibelline party. It is to be remarked, that the Joyous Friars were called Knights of St. Mary, and became knights on taking that habit : their robes were white, the mantle sable, and the arms a white field and red cross with two stars : their office was to defend widows and orphans ; they were to act as mediators ; they had internal regulations, like other religious bodies. The above mentioned M. Loderingo was the founder of that order. But it was not long before they too well deserved the appellation given them, and were found to be more bent on enjoying themselves than on any other object.

Bologna's natives ; Catalano I,  
 He Loderingo named ; and by thy land  
 Together taken, as men used to take  
 A single and indifferent arbiter,  
 To reconcile their strifes. How there we sped,  
 Gardingo's vicinage<sup>1</sup> can best declare."

" O friars ! " I began, " your miseries—"  
 But there brake off, for one had caught mine  
 eye,

Fix'd to a cross with three stakes on the ground,  
 He, when he saw me, writhed himself, throughout  
 out

Distorted, ruffling with deep sighs his beard.  
 And Catalano, who thereof was 'ware,  
 Thus spake : " That pierced spirit,<sup>2</sup> whom  
 intent

That view'st, was he who gave the Pharisees  
 Counsel, that it were fitting for one man

These two friars were called in by the Florentines, and had a residence assigned them in the palace belonging to the people, over against the Abbey. Such was the dependence placed on the character of their order, that it was expected they would be impartial, and would save the commonwealth any unnecessary expense ; instead of which, though inclined to opposite parties, they secretly and hypocritically concurred in promoting their own advantage rather than the public good." G. Villani, lib. 7. cap. xiii. This happened in 1266.

<sup>1</sup> *Gardingo's vicinage.*] The name of that part of the city which was inhabited by the powerful Ghibelline family of the Uberti, and destroyed under the partial and iniquitous administration of Catalano and Loderingo.

<sup>2</sup> *That pierced spirit.*] Caiaphas.

To suffer for the people. He doth lie  
 Transverse ; nor any passes, but him first  
 Behoves make feeling trial how each weighs.  
 In straits like this along the foss are placed  
 The father of his consort,<sup>1</sup> and the rest.  
 Partakers in that council, seed of ill  
 And sorrow to the Jews." I noted them,  
 How Virgil gazed with wonder upon him,  
 Thus abjectly extended on the cross  
 In banishment eternal. To the friar  
 He next his words address'd : " We pray ye  
 tell,

If so be lawful, whether on our right  
 Lies any opening in the rock, whereby  
 We both may issue hence, without constraint  
 On the dark angels, that compell'd they come  
 To lead us from this depth." He thus replied :  
 " Nearer than thou dost hope, there is a rock  
 From the great circle moving, which o'ersteps  
 Each vale of horror, save that here his cope  
 Is shatter'd. By the ruin ye may mount :  
 For on the side it slants, and most the height  
 Rises below." With head bent down awhile  
 My leader stood ; then spake : " He warn'd  
 us ill,<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *The father of his consort.*] Annas, father-in-law to Caiaphas.

<sup>2</sup> *He warn'd us ill.*] He refers to the falsehood told him by the demon. Canto xxi. 108.

Who yonder hangs the sinners on his hook."

To whom the friar : " At Bologna erst  
 I many vices of the devil heard ;  
 Among the rest was said, ' He is a liar,<sup>1</sup>  
 ' And the father of lies ! ' " When he had spoke  
 My leader with large strides proceeded on,  
 Somewhat disturb'd with anger in his look.

I therefore left the spirit's heavy laden,  
 And, following, his beloved footsteps mark'd.

## CANTO XXIV

### Argument.

Under the escort of his faithful master, Dante, not without difficulty, makes his way out of the sixth gulf ; and in the seventh, sees the robbers tormented by venomous and pestilent serpents. The soul of Vanni Fucci, who had pillaged the sacristy of Saint James in Pistoia, predicts some calamities that impended over that city, and over the Florentines.

IN the year's early nonage,<sup>2</sup> when the sun  
 Tempers his tresses in Aquarius' urn,  
 And now towards equal day the nights recede ;  
 Whenas the rime upon the earth puts on

<sup>1</sup> *He is a liar.*] " He is a liar and the father of it." John viii. 44. Dante had perhaps heard this text from one of the pulpits in Bologna.

<sup>2</sup> *In the year's early nonage.*] " At the latter part of January, when the sun enters into Aquarius, and the equinox is drawing near, when the hoar-frosts in the morning often wear the appearance of snow, but are melted by the rising sun."

Her dazzling sister's image, but not long  
Her milder sway endures ; then riseth up  
The village hind, whom fails his wintry store,  
And looking out beholds the plain around  
All whiten'd ; whence impatiently he smites  
His thighs, and to his hut returning in,  
There paces to and fro, wailing his lot,  
As a discomfited and helpless man ;  
Then comes he forth again, and feels new hope  
Spring in his bosom, finding e'en thus soon  
The world hath changed its countenance, grasps  
    his crook,

And forth to pasture drives his little flock :  
So me my guide dishearten'd, when I saw  
His troubled forehead ; and so speedily  
That ill was cured ; for at the fallen bridge  
Arriving, towards me with a look as sweet,  
He turn'd him back, as that I first beheld  
At the steep mountain's foot. Regarding well  
The ruin, and some counsel first maintain'd  
With his own thought, he open'd wide his arm  
And took me up. As one, who, while he works,  
Computes his labour's issue, that he seems  
Still to foresee the effect ; so lifting me  
Up to the summit of one peak, he fix'd  
His eye upon another. " Grapple that,"  
Said he, " but first make proof, if it be such  
As will sustain thee." For one capp'd with lead

This were no journey. Scarcely he, though light,

And I, though onward push'd from crag to crag,  
Could mount. And if the precinct of this coast  
Were not less ample than the last, for him  
I know not, but my strength had surely fail'd.  
But Malebolge all toward the mouth  
Inclining of the nethermost abyss,  
The site of every valley hence requires,  
That one side upward slope, the other fall,

At length the point from whence the utmost stone

Juts down, we reach'd ; soon as to that arrived  
So was the breath exhausted from my lungs,  
I could no farther, but did seat me there.

" Now needs thy best of man ; " so spake my guide :

" For not on downy plumes, nor under shade  
Of canopy reposing, fame is won ;  
Without which whosoe'er consumes his days,  
Leaveth such vestige of himself on earth,  
As smoke in air or foam upon the wave.  
Thou therefore rise : vanquish thy weariness  
By the mind's effort, in each struggle form'd  
To vanquish, if she suffer not the weight  
Of her corporeal frame to crush her down.  
A longer ladder yet remains to scale.  
From these to have escaped sufficeth not.

If well thou note me, profit by my words."

I straightway rose, and show'd myself less spent

Than I in truth did feel me. "On," I cried,  
"For I am stout and fearless." Up the rock  
Our way we held, more rugged than before,  
Narrower, and steeper far to climb. From talk  
I ceased not, as we journey'd, so to seem  
Least faint; whereat a voice from the other foss

Did issue forth, for utterance suited ill.

Though on the arch that crosses there I stood,  
What were the words I knew not, but who spake

Seem'd moved in anger. Down I stoop'd to look;  
But my quick eye might reach not to the depth  
For shrouding darkness; wherefore thus I spake:

"To the next circle, teacher, bend thy steps,  
And from the wall dismount we; for as hence  
I hear and understand not, so I see  
Beneath, and naught discern."—"I answer not,"

Said he, "but by the deed. To fair request  
Silent performance maketh best return."

We from the bridge's head descended, where  
To the eighth mound it joins; and then, the chasm

Opening to view, I saw a crowd within  
 Of serpents terrible, so strange of shape  
 And hideous, that remembrance in my veins  
 Yet shrinks the vital current. Of her sands  
 Let Lybia vaunt no more : if Jaculus,  
 Pareas and Chelyder be her brood,  
 Cenchrus and Amphisbæna, plagues so dire  
 Or in such numbers swarming ne'er she show'd,  
 Not with all Ethiopia, and whate'er  
 Above the Erythræan sea is spawn'd.

Amid this dread exuberance of woe  
 Ran naked spirits wing'd with horrid fear.  
 Nor hope had they of crevice where to hide,  
 Or heliotrope<sup>1</sup> to charm them out of view.  
 With serpents were their hands behind them  
     bound,  
 Which through their reins infix'd the tail and  
     head,  
 Twisted in folds before. And lo ! on one  
 Near to our side, darted an adder up,  
 And, where the neck is on the shoulders tied,  
 Transpierced him. Far more quickly than  
     e'er pen  
 Wrote O or I, he kindled, burn'd, and changed

<sup>1</sup> *Heliotrope.*] "A stone," says Boccaccio, in his humorous tale of Calandrino, "which we lapidaries call heliotrope, of such extraordinary virtue, that the bearer of it is effectually concealed from the sight of all present." *Decam.* G. viii. N. 3.

To ashes all, pour'd out upon the earth.  
 When there dissolved he lay, the dust again  
 Uproll'd spontaneous, and the self-same form  
 Instant resumed. So mighty sages tell,  
 The Arabian Phœnix, when five hundred years  
 Have well-nigh circled, dies, and springs forth-  
 with

Renaissant : blade nor herb throughout his life  
 He tastes, but tears of frankincense alone  
 And odorous amomum : swaths of nard  
 And myrrh his funeral shroud. As one that  
 falls,

He knows not how, by force demoniac dragg'd  
 To earth, or through obstruction fettering up  
 In chains invisible the powers of man,  
 Who, risen from his trance, gazeth around,  
 Bewilder'd with the monstrous agony  
 He hath endured, and wildly staring sighs ;  
 So stood aghast the sinner when he rose.

Oh ! how severe God's judgment, that deals  
 out

Such blows in stormy vengeance. Who he was,  
 My teacher next inquired ; and thus in few  
 He answer'd : " Vanni Fucci<sup>1</sup> am I call'd,

<sup>1</sup> *Vanni Fucci.*] He is said to have been an illegitimate offspring of the family of Lazari in Pistoia, and, having robbed the sacristy of the church of St. James in that city to have charged Vanni della Nona with the sacrilege ; in consequence of which accusation the latter suffered death.

Not long since rained down from Tuscany  
To this dire gullet. Me the bestial life  
And not the human pleased, mule that I was,  
Who in Pistoia found my worthy den."

I then to Virgil : " Bid him stir not hence ;  
And ask what crime did thrust him hither :  
once

A man I knew him, choleric and bloody."

The sinner heard and feign'd not, but to-  
wards me

His mind directing and his face, wherein  
Was dismal shame depicted, thus he spake :  
" It grieves me more to have been caught by  
thee

In this sad plight, which thou beholdest, than  
When I was taken from the other life.

I have no power permitted to deny  
What thou inquirest. I am doom'd thus low  
To dwell, for that the sacristy by me  
Was rifled of its goodly ornaments,  
And with the guilt another falsely charged.  
But that thou mayst not joy to see me thus,  
So as thou e'er shall 'scape this darksome realm,  
Open thine ears and hear what I forebode.  
Reft of the Neri first Pistoia <sup>1</sup> pines ;

---

<sup>1</sup> *Pistoia.*] " In May, 1301, the Bianchi party of Pistoia, with the assistance and favour of the Bianchi, who ruled Florence, drove out the party of the Neri from the former

Then Florence<sup>1</sup> changeth citizens and laws ;  
 From Valdimagra,<sup>2</sup> drawn by wrathful Mars,  
 A vapour rises, wrapt in turbid mists,  
 And sharp and eager driveth on the storm  
 With arrowy hurtling o'er Piceno's field,  
 Whence suddenly the cloud shall burst, and  
 strike

Each helpless Bianco prostrate to the ground.  
 This have I told, that grief may rend thy  
 heart."

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## CANTO XXV

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### Argument.

The sacrilegious Fucci vents his fury in blasphemy, is seized by serpents, and flying is pursued by Cacus in place, destroying their houses, palaces, and farms." Giov. Villani, *Hist. lib. 8. cap. xliv.*

<sup>1</sup> *Then Florence.]* "Soon after the Bianchi will be expelled from Florence, the Neri will prevail, and the laws and people will be changed."

<sup>2</sup> *From Valdimagra.]* The commentators explain this prophetical threat to allude to the victory obtained by the Marquis Morello Malaspina of Valdimagra (a tract of country now called the Lunigiana), who put himself at the head of the Neri, and defeated their opponents, the Bianchi, in the Campo Piceno near Pistoia, soon after the occurrence related in Note 1, p. 176. Of this engagement I find no mention in Villani. Balbo (*Vita di Dante*, vol. ii. p. 143), refers to Gerini, *Memorie Storiche di Lunigiana*, tom. ii. p. 123, for the whole history of this Morello or Moroello. Currado Malaspina is introduced in the eighth Canto of the *Purgatorio*; where it appears, that although on the present occasion they espoused contrary sides, most import-

the form of a Centaur, who is described with a swarm of serpents on his haunch, and a dragon on his shoulders breathing forth fire. Our Poet then meets with the spirits of three of his countrymen, two of whom undergo a marvellous transformation in his presence.

WHEN he had spoke, the sinner raised his hands<sup>1</sup>

Pointed in mockery, and cried : “ Take them, God !

I level them at thee.” From that day forth  
The serpents were my friends ; for round his  
neck

One of them rolling twisted, as it said,  
“ Be silent, tongue ! ” Another, to his arms  
Upgliding, tied them, riveting itself  
So close, it took from them the power to move.

Pistoia ! ah Pistoia ! why dost doubt  
To turn thee into ashes, cumbering earth  
No longer, since in evil act so far  
Thou hast outdone thy seed ?<sup>2</sup> I did not  
mark,

ant favours were nevertheless conferred by that family on our Poet, at a subsequent period of his exile, in 1307.

<sup>1</sup> *His hands.]* “ The practice of thrusting out the thumb between the first and second fingers, to express the feelings of insult and contempt, has prevailed very generally among the nations of Europe, and for many ages had been denominated ‘ making the fig,’ or described at least by some [equivalent expression.]” Douce’s *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol. i. p. 492, ed. 1807. The passage in the original text has not escaped this diligent commentator.

<sup>2</sup> *Thy seed.]* Thy ancestry.

Through all the gloomy circles of the abyss,  
Spirit, that swell'd so proudly 'gainst his God ;  
Not him,<sup>1</sup> who headlong fell from Thebes. He  
fled,

Nor utter'd more ; and after him there came  
A centaur full of fury, shouting, " Where,  
Where is the caitiff ? " On Maremma's  
marsh <sup>2</sup>

Swarm not the serpent tribe, as on his haunch  
They swarm'd, to where the human face begins.  
Behind his head, upon the shoulders, lay

With open wings a dragon, breathing fire  
On whomsoe'er he met. To me my guide :  
" Cacus <sup>3</sup> is this, who underneath the rock  
Of Aventine spread oft a lake of blood.

He, from his brethren parted, here must tread  
A different journey, for his fraudulent theft  
Of the great herd that near him stall'd ;  
whence found

His felon deeds their end, beneath the mace  
Of stout Alcides, that perchance laid on  
A hundred blows,<sup>4</sup> and not the tenth was  
felt."

<sup>1</sup> Not him.] Capaneus. Canto xiv.

<sup>2</sup> On Maremma's marsh.] An extensive tract near the sea shore of Tuscany.

<sup>3</sup> Cacus.] Virgil. *Aen.* lib. 8. 193.

<sup>4</sup> A hundred blows.] Less than ten blows, out of the hundred Hercules gave him, had deprived him of feeling.

While yet he spake, the centaur sped away :  
And under us three spirits came, of whom  
Nor I nor he was ware, till they exclaim'd,  
“ Say who are ye ! ” We then brake off dis-  
course,

Intent on these alone. I knew them not :  
But, as it chanceth oft, befel, that one  
Had need to name another. “ Where,” said he,  
“ Doth Cianfa <sup>1</sup> lurk ? ” I, for a sign my guide  
Should stand attentive, placed against my lips  
The finger lifted. If, O reader ! now  
Thou be not apt to credit what I tell,  
No marvel ; for myself do scarce allow  
The witness of mine eyes. But as I look'd  
Toward them, lo ! a serpent with six feet  
Springs forth on one, and fastens full upon  
him :

His midmost grasp'd the belly, a forefoot  
Seized on each arm (while deep in either cheek  
He flesh'd his fangs) ; the hinder on the thighs  
Were spread, 'twixt which the tail inserted  
curl'd

Upon the reins behind. Ivy ne'er clasp'd  
A dodder'd oak, as round the other's limbs  
The hideous monster intertwined his own.  
Then, as they both had been of burning wax,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Cianfa.*] He is said to have been of the family of Donati at Florence.

Each melted into other, mingling hues,  
 That which was either now was seen no more.  
 Thus up the shrinking paper,<sup>1</sup> ere it burns,  
 A brown tint glides, not turning yet to black,  
 And the clean white expires. The other two  
 Look'd on, exclaiming. "Ah! how dost thou  
 change,

Agnello!<sup>2</sup> See! Thou art nor double now,  
 Nor only one." The two heads now became  
 One, and two figures blended in one form  
 Appear'd, where both were lost. Of the four  
 lengths

Two arms were made: the belly and the chest,  
 The thighs and legs, into such members changed  
 As never eye hath seen. Of former shape  
 All trace was vanish'd. Two, yet neither,  
 seem'd

That image miscreate, and so pass'd on  
 With tardy steps. As underneath the scourge

<sup>1</sup> *Thus up the shrinking paper.*] Many of the commentators suppose that by "papiro" is here meant the wick of a lamp or candle, and Lombardi adduces an extract from Pier Crescenzi (*Agricolt.* lib. 6. cap. ix.) to show that this use was then made of the plant. But Tiraboschi has proved that paper made of linen came into use towards the latter half of the fourteenth century, and that the inventor of it was Pier da Fabiano, who carried on his manufactory in the city of Trevigi; whereas paper of cotton, with, perhaps, some linen mixed, was used during the twelfth century. *Stor. della Lett. Ital.* tom. v. lib. i. cap. iv. sec. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Agnello.*] Agnello Brunelleschi.

Of the fierce dog-star that lays bare the fields,  
 Shifting from brake to brake the lizard seems  
 A flash of lightning, if he thwart the road ;  
 So toward the entrails of the other two  
 Approaching seemed an adder all on fire,  
 As the dark pepper-grain livid and swart.  
 In that part,<sup>1</sup> whence our life is nourish'd first,  
 One he transpierced ; then down before him  
 fell

Stretch'd out. The pierced spirit look'd on  
 him,

But spake not ; yea, stood motionless and  
 yawn'd,

As if by sleep or feverous fit assail'd.

He eyed the serpent, and the serpent him.

One from the wound, the other from the mouth  
 Breathed a thick smoke, whose vapoury  
 columns join'd.

Lucan in mute attention now may hear,  
 Nor thy disastrous fate, Sabellus, tell,  
 Nor thine, Nasidius. Ovid <sup>2</sup> now be mute.  
 What if in warbling fiction he record  
 Cadmus and Arethusa, to a snake  
 Him changed, and her into a fountain clear,  
 I envy not ; for never face to face

<sup>1</sup> *In that part.]* The navel.

<sup>2</sup> *Ovid.] Metam.* lib. 4. and 5.

Two natures thus transmuted did he sing,  
Wherein both shapes were ready to assume  
The other's substance. They in mutual guise  
So answer'd that the serpent split his train  
Divided to a fork, and the pierced spirit  
Drew close his steps together, legs and thighs  
Compacted, that no sign of juncture soon  
Was visible: the tail, disparted, took  
The figure which the spirit lost; its skin  
Softening, his indurated to a rind.

The [shoulders next I mark'd, that entering  
join'd

The monster's arm-pits, whose two shorter  
feet

So lengthen'd, as the others dwindling shrunk.  
The feet behind then twisting up became  
That part that man conceals, which in the  
wretch

Was cleft in twain. While both the shadowy  
smoke

With a new colour veils, and generates  
The excrescent pile on one, peeling it off  
From the other body, lo! upon his feet  
One upright rose, and prone the other fell.  
Nor yet their glaring and malignant lamps  
Were shifted, though each feature changed  
beneath.

Of him who stood erect, the mounting face

Retreated towards the temples, and what  
there

Superfluous matter came, shot out in ears  
From the smooth cheeks ; the rest, not back-  
ward dragg'd,

Of its excess did shape the nose ; and swell'd  
Into due size protuberant the lips.

He, on the earth who lay, meanwhile extends  
His sharpen'd visage, and draws down the ears  
Into the head, as doth the slug his horns.

His tongue, continuous before and apt  
For utterance, severs ; and the other's fork  
Closing unites. That done, the smoke was  
laid.

The soul, transform'd into the brute, glides off,  
Hissing along the vale, and after him  
The other talking sputters ; but soon turn'd  
His new-grown shoulders on him, and in few  
Thus to another spake : " Along this path  
Crawling, as I have done, speed Buoso now ! "

So saw I fluctuate in successive change  
The unsteady ballast of the seventh hold :  
And here if aught my pen have swerved, events  
So strange may be its warrant. O'er mine eyes  
Confusion hung, and on my thoughts amaze.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Buoso.*] He is also said by some to have been of the Donati family ; but by others of the Abbati.

Yet scaped they not so covertly, but well  
 I mark'd Sciancato <sup>1</sup>: he alone it was  
 Of the three first that came, who changed not :  
 thou  
 The other's fate, Gaville ! <sup>2</sup> still dost rue.

---

## CANTO XXVI

## Argument.

Remounting by the steps, down which they had descended to the seventh gulf, they go forward to the arch that stretches over the eighth, and from thence behold numberless flames wherein are punished the evil counsellors, each flame containing a sinner, save one in which were Diomede and Ulysses, the latter of whom relates the manner of his death.

FLORENCE, exult ! for thou so mightily  
 Hast thriven, that o'er land and sea thy wings  
 Thou beatest, and thy name spreads over hell.  
 Among the plunderers, such the three I found  
 Thy citizens ; whence shame to me thy son,  
 And no proud honour to thyself redounds.

<sup>1</sup> *Sciancato.*] Puccio Sciancato, a noted robber, whose family, Venturi says, he has not been able to discover. The Latin annotator on the Monte Casino MS. informs us that he was one of the Galigai of Florence, the decline of which house is mentioned in the *Paradiso*, Canto xvi. 96.

<sup>2</sup> *Gaville.*] Francesco Guercio Cavalcante was killed at Gaville, near Florence; and in revenge of his death several inhabitants of that district were put to death.

But if our minds, when dreaming near the dawn,  
 Are of the truth presageful, thou ere long  
 Shalt feel what Prato<sup>1</sup> (not to say the rest)  
 Would fain might come upon thee ; and that chance

Were in good time, if it befel thee now.  
 Would so it were, since it must needs befall !  
 For as time<sup>2</sup> wears me, I shall grieve the more.

We from the depth departed ; and my guide  
 Remounting scaled the flinty steps,<sup>3</sup> which late  
 We downward traced, and drew me up the steep.

Pursuing thus our solitary way  
 Among the crags and splinters of the rock,  
 Sped not our feet without the help of hands.

<sup>1</sup> *Shalt feel what Prato.*] The Poet prognosticates the calamities which were soon to befall his native city, and which, he says, even her nearest neighbour, Prato, would wish her. The calamities more particularly pointed at are said to be the fall of a wooden bridge over the Arno, in May, 1304, where a large multitude were assembled to witness a representation of hell and the infernal torments, in consequence of which accident many lives were lost ; and a conflagration, that in the following month destroyed more than seventeen hundred houses, many of them sumptuous buildings. See G. Villani, *Hist.* lib. 8. cap. lxx. and lxxi.

<sup>2</sup> *As time.*] “ I shall feel all calamities more sensibly as I am further advanced in life.”

<sup>3</sup> *The flinty steps.*] Ventura after Daniello and Volpi, explains the word in the original, “ borni,” to mean the stones that project from a wall, for other buildings to be joined to, which the workmen call “ toothings.”

Then sorrow seized me, which e'en now  
revives,

As my thought turns again to what I saw,  
And, more than I am wont,<sup>1</sup> I reign and curb  
The powers of nature in me, lest they run  
Where Virtue guides not ; that, if aught of  
good

My gentle star or something better gave me,  
I envy not myself the precious boon.

As in that season, when the sun least veils  
His face that lightens all, what time the fly  
Gives way to the shrill gnat, the peasant  
then,

Upon some cliff reclined, beneath him sees  
Fire-flies innumerable spangling o'er the vale,  
Vineyard or tilth, where his day labour lies ;  
With flames so numberless throughout its  
space

Shone the eighth chasm, apparent, when the  
depth

---

<sup>1</sup> *More than I am wont.*] “ When I reflect on the punishment allotted to those who do not give sincere and upright advice to others, I am more anxious than ever not to abuse to so bad a purpose those talents, whatever they may be, which Nature, or rather Providence, has conferred on me.” It is probable that this declaration was the result of real feeling in the mind of Dante, whose political character would have given great weight to any opinion or party he had espoused, and to whom indigence and exile might have offered strong temptations to deviate from that line of conduct which a strict sense of duty prescribed.

Was to my view exposed. As he, whose wrongs<sup>1</sup>

The bears avenged, at its departure saw Elijah's chariot, when the steeds erect Raised their steep flight for heaven ; his eyes, meanwhile,

Straining pursued them, till the flame alone, Upsoaring like a misty speck, he kenn'd : E'en thus along the gulf moves every flame, A sinner so enfolded close in each, That none exhibits token of the theft.

Upon the bridge I forward bent to look, And grasp'd a flinty mass, or else had fallen, Though push'd not from the height. The guide, who mark'd

How I did gaze attentive, thus began : " Within these ardours are the spirits, each Swath'd in confining fire."—" Master ! thy word,"

I answer'd, " hath assured me ; yet I deem'd Already of the truth, already wish'd To ask thee who is in yon fire, that comes So parted at the summit, as it seem'd Ascending from that funeral pile<sup>2</sup> where lay

<sup>1</sup> *As he, whose wrongs.]* <sup>2</sup> Kings, ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ascending from that funeral pile.]* The flame is said to have divided on the funeral pile which consumed the bodies of Eteocles and Polynices, as if conscious of the enmity that actuated them while living.

The Theban brothers." He replied : " Within,  
Ulysses there and Diomede endure  
Their penal tortures, thus to vengeance now  
Together hastening, as erewhile to wrath.  
These in the flame with ceaseless groans de-  
    plore

The ambush of the horse,<sup>1</sup>" that open'd wide  
A portal for that goodly seed to pass,  
Which sow'd imperial Rome ; nor less the guile  
Lament they, whence, of her Achilles 'reft,  
Deïdamia yet in death complains.  
And there is rued the stratagem that Troy  
Of her Palladium spoil'd."—" If they have  
    power

Of utterance from within these sparks," said I,  
" O master ! think my prayer a thousand-fold  
In repetition urged, that thou vouchsafe  
To pause till here the horned flame arrive.  
See, how toward it with desire I bend."

He thus : " Thy prayer is worthy of much  
    praise,  
And I accept it therefore ; but do thou  
Thy tongue refrain : to question them be  
mine ;

<sup>1</sup> *The ambush of the horse.]* "The ambush of the wooden horse, that caused Æneas to quit the city of Troy and seek his fortune in Italy, where his descendants founded the Roman empire."

For I divine thy wish ; and they perchance,  
For they were Greeks,<sup>1</sup> might shun discourse  
with thee."

When there the flame had come, where time  
and place

Seem'd fitting to my guide, he thus began ;  
" O ye, who dwell two spirits in one fire !  
If, living, I of you did merit aught,  
Whate'er the measure were of that desert,  
When in the world my lofty strain I pour'd,  
Move ye not on, till one of you unfold  
In what clime death o'ertook him self-des-  
troy'd."

Of the old flame forthwith the greater horn  
Began to roll, murmuring, as a fire  
That labours with the wind, then to and fro  
Wagging the top, as a tongue uttering sounds,  
Threw out its voice, and spake : " When I  
escaped

From Circe, who beyond a circling year  
Had held me near Caieta<sup>2</sup> by her charms,  
Ere thus Æneas yet had named the shore ;  
Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence  
Of my old father, nor return of love,  
That should have crown'd Penelope with joy,

<sup>1</sup> *For they were Greeks.]* By this it is, perhaps, implied  
that they were haughty and arrogant.

<sup>2</sup> *Caieta.]* Virgil, *Æneid*, lib. 7. 1.

Could overcome in me the zeal I had  
To explore the world, and search the ways of  
of life,

Man's evil and his virtue. Forth I sail'd  
Into the deep illimitable main,  
With but one bark, and the small faithful band  
That yet cleaved to me. As Iberia far,  
Far as Marocco, either shore I saw,  
And the Sardinian and each isle beside  
Which round that ocean bathes. Tardy with  
age

Were I and my companions, when we came  
To the strait pass,<sup>1</sup> where Hercules ordain'd  
The boundaries not to be o'erstepp'd by man.  
The walls of Seville to my right I left,  
On the other hand already Ceuta past.

'O brothers !' I began, ' who to the west  
' Through perils without number now have  
reach'd ;  
' To this the short remaining watch, that yet  
' Our senses have to wake, refuse not proof  
' Of the unpeopled world, following the track  
' Of Phœbus. Call to mind from whence ye  
sprang :

' Ye were not form'd to live the lives of brutes,  
' But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.'

---

<sup>1</sup> *The strait pass.]* The straits of Gibraltar.

With these few words I sharpen'd for the voyage

The mind of my associates, that I then Could scarcely have withheld them. To the dawn

Our poop we turn'd and for the witless flight  
Made our oars wings, still gaining on the left.  
Each star of the other pole night now beheld,  
And ours so low, that from the ocean floor  
It rose not. Five times re-illumed, as oft  
Vanished the light from underneath the moon,  
Since the deep way we enter'd, when from far

Appear'd a mountain dim,<sup>1</sup> loftiest methought  
Of all I e'er beheld. Joy seized us straight;  
But soon to mourning changed. From the new land

A whirlwind sprung, and at her foremost side  
Did strike the vessel. Thrice it whirl'd her round

With all the waves; the fourth time lifted up

<sup>1</sup> *A mountain dim.*] The mountain of Purgatory. Amongst the various opinions of theologians respecting the situation of the terrestrial paradise, Pietro Lombardo relates, that 'it was separated by a long space, either of sea or land, from the regions inhabited by men, and placed in the ocean, reaching as far as to the lunar circle, so that the waters of the deluge did not reach it.' *Sent. lib. 2. dist. 17.* Thus Lombardi.

The poop, and sank the prow : so fate decreed :  
And over us the booming billows closed." <sup>1</sup>

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## CANTO XXVII

---

### Argument.

The Poet, treating of the same punishment as in the last Canto, relates that he turned towards a flame in which was the Count Guido la Montefeltro, whose inquiries respecting the state of Romagna, he answers ; and Guido is thereby induced to declare who he is, and why condemned to that torment.

Now upward rose the flame, and still'd its light  
To speak no more, and now pass'd on with leave  
From the mild poet gain'd ; when following  
came

Another, from whose top a sound confused,  
Forth issuing, drew our eyes that way to look  
As the Sicilian bull,<sup>2</sup> that rightfully

---

<sup>1</sup> *Closed.*] Venturi refers to Pliny and Solinus for the opinion that Ulysses was the founder of Lisbon, from whence he thinks it was easy for the fancy of a poet to send him on yet further enterprises. Perhaps the story (which it is not unlikely that our author will be found to have borrowed from some legend of the Middle Ages) may have taken its rise partly from the obscure oracle returned by the ghost of Tiresias to Ulysses (see the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*), and partly from the fate which there was reason to suppose had befallen some adventurous explorers of the Atlantic ocean.

<sup>2</sup> *The Sicilian bull.*] The engine of torture invented by Perillus, for the tyrant Phalaris.

His cries first echoed who had shaped its mould,  
 Did so rebellow, with the voice of him  
 Tormented, that the brazen monster seem'd  
 Pierced through with pain ; thus, while no  
 way they found,  
 Nor avenue immediate through the flame,  
 Into its language turn'd the dismal words :  
 But soon as they had won their passage forth,  
 Up from the point, which vibrating obey'd  
 Their motion at the tongue, those sounds were  
 heard :

“ Oh thou ! to whom I now direct my voice,  
 That lately didst exclaim in Lombard phrase,  
 ‘ Depart thou ; I solicit thee no more ; ’  
 Though somewhat tardy I perchance arrive,  
 Let it not irk thee here to pause awhile,  
 And with me parley : lo ! it irks not me,  
 And yet I burn. If but e'en now thou fall  
 Into this blind world, from that pleasant land  
 Of Latium, whence I draw my sum of guilt,  
 Tell me if those who in Romagna dwell  
 Have peace or war. For of the mountains  
 there <sup>1</sup>  
 Was I, betwixt Urbino and the height  
 Whence Tiber first unlocks his mighty flood.”

---

<sup>1</sup> *Of the mountains there.] Montefeltro.*

Leaning I listen'd yet with heedful ear,  
 When, as he touch'd my side, the leader thus :  
 " Speak thou : he is a Latian." My reply  
 Was ready, and I spake without delay :  
 " O Spirit ! who art hidden here below,  
 Never was thy Romagna without war  
 In her proud tyrants' bosoms, nor is now :  
 But open war there left I none. The state,  
 Ravenna hath maintain'd this many a year,  
 Is stedfast. There Polenta's eagle <sup>1</sup> broods ;

<sup>1</sup> *Polenta's eagle.*] Guido Novello da Polenta, who bore an eagle for his coat of arms. The name of Polenta was derived from a castle so called, in the neighbourhood of Brittonoro. Cervia is a small maritime city, about fifteen miles to the south of Ravenna. Guido was the son of Ostasio da Polenta, and made himself master of Ravenna in 1265. In 1322 he was deprived of his sovereignty, and died at Bologna in the year following. This last and most munificent patron of Dante is himself enumerated, by the historian of Italian literature, among the poets of his time. Tiraboschi, *Storia della Lett. Ital.* tom. v. lib. 3 c. ii. sec. 13. The passage in the text might have removed the uncertainty which Tiraboschi expressed respecting the duration of Guido's absence from Ravenna, when he was driven from that city in 1295, by the arms of Pietro, archbishop of Monreale. It must evidently have been very short, since his government is here represented (in 1300) as not having suffered any material disturbance for many years. In the Proemium to the *Annotations on the Decameron of Boccaccio*, written by those who were deputed to that work, Ediz. Giunti, 1573, it is said of Guido Novello, " del quale si leggono ancora alcune composizioni, per poche che elle sieno, secondo quella età, belle e leggiadre ; " and in the collection edited by Allacci at Naples, 1661, p. 382, is a sonnet of his, which breathes a high and pure spirit of Platonism. Among the MSS. of the *Iliad* in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, described by Mai,

And in his broad circumference of plume  
O'ershadows Cervia. The green talons grasp  
The land,<sup>1</sup> that stood erewhile the proof so long,  
And piled in bloody heap the host of France.

“ The old mastiff of Verruchio and the  
young,<sup>2</sup>

That tore Montagna<sup>3</sup> in their wrath, still make,  
Where they are wont, an augre of their fangs.

there is one that was in the possession of Guido. *Iliadis Fragmenta*, etc. fol. Mediol. 1819, *Proæmium*, p. xlvi. It was, perhaps, seen by Dante. To this account I must now subjoin that which has since been given, but without any reference to authorities, by Troya : “ In the course of eight years, from 1310 to 1318, Guido III of Polenta, father of Francesca, together with his sons Bernardino and Ostasio, had died. A third son, named Bannino, was father of Guido IV. Of these two it is not known whether they held the lordship of Ravenna. But it came to the sons of Ostasio, Guido V called Novello, and Rinaldo the archbishop : on the sons of Bernardino devolved the sovereignty of the neighbouring city of Cervia.” *Veltro Allegorico di Dante*, ed. 1826, p. 176.

<sup>1</sup> *The land.*] The territory of Forli, the inhabitants of which, in 1282, were enabled, by the stratagem of Guido da Montefeltro, who then governed it, to defeat with great slaughter the French army by which it had been besieged. See G. Villani, lib. 7. cap. lxxxi. The Poet informs Guido, its former ruler, that it is now in the possession of Sinibaldo Ordolaffi, or Ardelaffi, whom he designates by his coat of arms, a lion vert.

<sup>2</sup> *The old mastiff of Verruchio and the young.*] Malatesta and Malatestino his son, lords of Rimini, called, from their ferocity, the mastiffs of Verruchio, which was the name of their castle. Malatestino was, perhaps, the husband of Francesca, daughter of Guido da Polenta. See Notes to Canto v. 113.

<sup>3</sup> *Montagna.*] Montagna de’ Pareitati, a noble knight, and leader of the Ghibelline party at Rimini, murdered by Malatestino.

" Lamone's city, and Santerno's,<sup>1</sup> range  
Under the lion of the snowy lair,<sup>2</sup>  
Inconstant partisan, that changeth sides,  
Or ever summer yields to winter's frost.  
And she, whose flank is wash'd of Savio's  
wave,<sup>3</sup>  
As 'twixt the level and the steep she lies,  
Lives so 'twixt tyrant power and liberty.

" Now tell us, I entreat thee, who art thou :  
Be not more hard than others. In the world,  
So may thy name still rear its forehead high."

Then roar'd awhile the fire, its sharpen'd  
point  
On either side waved, and thus breathed at  
last :  
" If I did think my answer were to one  
Who ever could return unto the world,  
This flame should rest unshaken. But since  
ne'er,  
If true be told me, any from this depth

<sup>1</sup> *Lamone's city and Santerno's.]* Lamone is the river at Faenza, and Santerno at Imola.

<sup>2</sup> *The lion of the snowy lair.]* Machinardo Pagano, whose arms were a lion azure on a field argent; mentioned again in the *Purgatorio*, Canto xiv. 122. See G. Villani *passim*, where he is called Machinardo da Susinana.

<sup>3</sup> *Whose flank is wash'd of Savio's wave.]* Cesena, situated at the foot of a mountain, and washed by the river Savio, that often descends with a swollen and rapid stream from the Apennine.

Has found his upward way, I answer thee,  
Nor fear lest infamy record the words.

“ A man of arms <sup>1</sup> at first, I clothed me then  
In good Saint Francis’ girdle, hoping so  
To have made amends. And certainly my  
hope

Had fail’d not, but that he, whom curses light  
on,

The high priest,<sup>2</sup> again seduced me into sin.  
And how, and wherefore, listen while I tell.  
Long as this spirit moved the bones and pulp  
My mother gave me, less my deeds bespeak  
The nature of the lion than the fox.

All ways of winding subtlety I knew,  
And with such art conducted, that the sound  
Reach’d the world’s limit. Soon as to that  
part

Of life I found me come, when each behoves  
To lower sails <sup>3</sup> and gather in the lines ;

<sup>1</sup> *A man of arms.*] Guido da Montefeltro.

<sup>2</sup> *The high priest.*] Boniface VIII.

<sup>3</sup> *To lower sails.*] Our Poet had the same train of thought as when he wrote that most beautiful passage in his *Convito*, beginning “ E qui è da sapere, che siccome dice Tullio in quello di Senettute, la naturale morte,” etc. p. 209. “ As it hath been said by Cicero, in his treatise on old age, natural death is like a port and haven to us after a long voyage ; and even as the good mariner, when he draws near the port, lowers his sails, and enters it softly with a weak and inoffensive motion, so ought we to lower the sails of our worldly operations, and to return to

That, which before had pleased me, then I  
rued,

And to repentance and confession turn'd,  
Wretch that I was ; and well it had bested me.  
The chief of the new Pharisees <sup>1</sup> meantime,  
Waging his warfare near the Lateran,  
Not with the Saraoens or Jews (his foes  
All Christians were, nor against Acre one  
Had fought,<sup>2</sup> nor traffick'd in the Soldan's  
land),

He, his great charge nor sacred ministry,  
In himself reverenced, nor in me that cord

God with all our understanding and heart, to the end that we may reach this haven with all quietness and with all peace. And herein we are mightily instructed by nature in a lesson of mildness ; for in such a death itself there is neither pain nor bitterness ; but, as ripe fruit is lightly and without violence loosened from its branch, so our soul without grieving departs from the body in which it hath been."

<sup>1</sup> *The chief of the new Pharisees.*] Boniface VIII, whose enmity to the family of Colonna prompted him to destroy their houses near the Lateran. Wishing to obtain possession of their other seat, Penestrino, he consulted with Guido da Montefeltro how he might accomplish his purpose, offering him at the same time absolution for his past sins, as well as for that which he was then tempting him to commit. Guido's advice was, that kind words and fair promises would put his enemies into his power ; and they accordingly soon afterwards fell into the snare laid for them, A.D. 1298. See G. Villani, lib. 8. cap. xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> ————— *Nor against Acre one*

*Had fought.*] He alludes to the renegade Christians, by whom the Saracens, in April, 1291, were assisted to recover St. John d'Acre, the last possession of the Christians in the Holy Land.

Which used to mark with leanness whom it  
girded.

As in Soracte, Constantine besought,  
To cure his leprosy, Sylvester's aid ;  
So me, to cure the fever of his pride,  
This man besought : my counsel to that  
end

He ask'd ; and I was silent ; for his words  
Seem'd drunken : but forthwith he thus  
resumed :

' From thy heart banish fear : of all offence  
' I hitherto absolve thee. In return,  
' Teach me my purpose so to execute,  
' That Penestrino cumber earth no more.  
' Heaven, as thou knowest, I have power to  
shut  
' And open : and the keys are therefore twain,  
' The which my predecessor <sup>1</sup> meanly prized.'

" Then, yielding to the forceful arguments,  
Of silence as more perilous I deem'd,  
And answer'd : ' Father ! since thou washest  
me

' Clear of that guilt wherein I now must fall,  
' Large promise with performance scant, be  
sure,  
' Shall make thee triumph in thy lofty seat.'

" When I was number'd with the dead,  
then came

Saint Francis for me ; but a cherub dark  
He met, who cried, ' Wrong me not ; he is  
mine,

' And must below to join the wretched  
crew,

' For the deceitful counsel which he gave.

' E'er since I watch'd him, hovering at his  
hair.

' No power can the impenitent absolve ;

' Nor to repent, and will, at once consist,

' By contradiction absolute forbid.'

Oh misery ! how I shook myself, when he  
Seized me, and cried, ' Thou haply thought'st  
me not

' A disputant in logic so exact ! '

To Minos down he bore me ; and the judge  
Twined eight times round his callous back the  
tail,

Which biting with excess of rage, he spake :

' This is a guilty soul, that in the fire

' Must vanish.' Hence, perdition doom'd, I  
rove

A prey to rankling sorrow, in this garb."

When he had thus fulfill'd his words, the  
flame

In dolour parted, beating to and fro,

And writhing its sharp horn. We onward  
went,  
I and my leader, up along the rock,  
Far as another arch, that overhangs  
The foss, wherein the penalty is paid  
Of those who load them with committed sin.

---

## CANTO XXVIII

## Argument.

They arrive in the ninth gulf, where the sowers of scandal, schismatics, and heretics, are seen with their limbs miserably maimed or divided in different ways. Among these the Poet finds Mahomet, Piero da Medicina, Curio, Mosca, and Bertrand de Born.

WHO, e'en in words unfetter'd, might at full  
Tell of the wounds and blood that now I saw,  
Though he repeated oft the tale ? No tongue  
So vast a theme could equal, speech and  
thought

Both impotent alike. If in one band  
Collected, stood the people all, who e'er  
Pour'd on Apulia's happy soil <sup>1</sup> their blood,

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<sup>1</sup> *Happy soil.*] There is a strange discordance here among the expounders. "Fortunata terra." Because of the vicissitudes of fortune which it experienced : Lan-

Slain by the Trojans,<sup>1</sup> and in that long war,<sup>2</sup>  
 When of the rings the measured booty made  
 A pile so high, as Rome's historian writes  
 Who errs not; with the multitude, that felt  
 The griding force of Guiscard's Norman steel,<sup>3</sup>  
 And those the rest,<sup>4</sup> whose bones are gather'd  
 yet

At Ceperano, there where treachery  
 Branded the Apulian name, or where beyond  
 Thy walls, O Tagliacozzo<sup>5</sup> without arms

---

dino. Fortunate, with respect to those who conquered in it: Vellutello. Or on account of its natural fertility: Venturi. The context requires that we should understand by "fortunata," "calamitous," "disgraziata," to which sense the word is extended in the Vocabulary of La Crusca: Lombardi. Volpi is silent.

<sup>1</sup> *The Trojans.*] Some MSS. have "Romani;" and Lombardi has admitted it into the text. Venturi had, indeed, before met with the same reading in some editon, but he has not told us in which.

<sup>2</sup> *In that long war.*] The war of Hannibal in Italy. "When Mago brought news of his victories to Carthage, in order to make his successes more easily credited, he commanded the golden rings to be poured out in the senate-house, which made so large a heap, that, as some relate, they filled three *modii* and a half. A more probable account represents them not to have exceeded one *modius.*" Livy, *Hist. lib. 23. xii.*

<sup>3</sup> *Guiscard's Norman steel.*] Robert Guiscard, who conquer'd the kingdom of Naples, and died in 1110.

<sup>4</sup> *And those the rest.*] The army of Manfredi, which, through the treachery of the Apulian troops, was overcome by Charles of Anjou in 1265, and fell in such numbers, that the bones of the slain were still gathered near Ceperano.

<sup>5</sup> *O Tagliacozzo.*] He alludes to the victory which Charles gained over Conradino, by the sage advice of the Sieur de Valeri, in 1268. G. Villani, *lib. 7. cap. xxvii.*

The old Alardo conquer'd ; and his limbs  
 One were to show transpierced, another his  
 Clean lopt away ; a spectacle like this  
 Were but a thing of naught, to the hideous  
 sight

Of the ninth chasm. A rundlet, that hath lost  
 Its middle or side stave, gapes not so wide  
 As one I mark'd torn from the chin throughout  
 Down to the hinder passage : 'twixt the legs  
 Dangling his entrails hung, the midriff lay  
 Open to view, and wretched ventricle,  
 That turns the engluttéd aliment to dross.

Whilst eagerly I fix on him my gaze,  
 He eyed me, with his hands laid his breast  
 bare,

And cried, " Now mark how I do rip me : lo !  
 How is Mohammed mangled ; before me  
 Walks Ali<sup>1</sup> weeping, from the chin his face  
 Cleft to the forelock ; and the others all,  
 Whom here thou seest, while they lived, did  
 sow

Scandal and schism, and therefore thus are  
 rent.

A fiend is here behind, who with his sword  
 Hacks us thus cruelly, slivering again  
 Each of this ream, when we have compast  
 round

<sup>1</sup> *Ali.*] The disciple of Mohammed.

The dismal way ; for first our gashes close  
 Ere we repass before him. But, say who  
 Art thou, that standest musing on the rock,  
 Haply so lingering to delay the pain  
 Sentenced upon thy crimes."—"Him death  
 not yet,"

My guide rejoin'd, "hath overta'en, nor sin  
 Conducts to torment ; but, that he may make  
 Full trial of your state, I who am dead  
 Must through the depths of hell, from orb to  
 orb,  
 Conduct him. Trust my words ; for they are  
 true."

More than a hundred spirits, when that they  
 heard,  
 Stood in the foss to mark me, through amaze  
 Forgetful of their pangs. "Thou, who per-  
 chance

Shalt shortly view the sun, this warning thou  
 Bear to Dolcino :<sup>1</sup> bid him, if he wish not

<sup>1</sup> *Dolcino.*] "In 1305, a friar, called Dolcino, who belonged to no regular order, contrived to raise in Novara, in Lombardy, a large company of the meaner sort of people, declaring himself to be a true apostle of Christ, and promulgating a community of property and of wives, with many other such heretical doctrines. He blamed the pope, cardinals, and other prelates of the holy church, for not observing their duty, nor leading the angelic life, and affirmed that he ought to be pope. He was followed by more than three thousand men and women, who lived promiscuously on the mountains together, like beasts, and,

Here soon to follow me, that with good store  
 Of food he arm him, lest imprisoning snows  
 Yield him a victim to Novara's power ;  
 No easy conquest else : " with foot upraised  
 For stepping, spake Mohammed, on the  
 ground

Then fix'd it to depart. Another shade,  
 Pierced in the throat, his nostrils mutilate  
 E'en from beneath the eyebrows, and one ear  
 Lopt off, with the rest, through wonder  
 stood

Gazing, before the rest advanced, and bared.  
 His wind-pipe, that without was all o'er-  
 smear'd

With crimson stain. " O thou ! " said he,  
 " whom sin

Condemns not, and whom erst (unless too near  
 Resemblance do deceive me) I aloft  
 Have seen on Latian ground, call thou to mind  
 Piero of Medicina,<sup>1</sup> if again

when they wanted provisions, supplied themselves by depre-  
 dation and rapine. This lasted for two years, till many,  
 being struck with compunction at the dissolute life they  
 led, his sect was much diminished ; and, through failure  
 of food and the severity of the snows, he was taken by the  
 people of Novara, and burnt, with Margarita, his com-  
 panion, and many other men and women whom his errors  
 had seduced."

<sup>1</sup> *Medicina.*] A place in the territory of Bologna.  
 Piero fomented dissensions among the inhabitants of that  
 city, and among the leaders of the neighbouring states.

Returning, thou behold'st the pleasant land <sup>1</sup>  
 That from Vercelli slopes to Mercabò ;  
 And there instruct the twain,<sup>2</sup> whom Fano  
 boasts

Her worthiest sons, Guido and Angelo,  
 That if 'tis given us here to scan aright  
 The future, they out of life's tenement <sup>3</sup>  
 Shall be cast forth, and whelm'd under the  
 waves

Near to Cattolica, through perfidy  
 Of a fell tyrant. 'Twixt the Cyprian isle  
 And Balearic, ne'er hath Neptune seen  
 An injury so foul, by pirates done,  
 Or Argive crew of old. That one-eyed traitor  
 (Whose realm, there is a spirit here were fain  
 His eye had still lack'd sight of) them shall  
 bring  
 To conference with him, then so shape his end

<sup>1</sup> *The pleasant land.]* Lombardy.

<sup>2</sup> *The twain.]* Guido del Cassero and Angioletto da Cagnano, two of the worthiest and most distinguished citizens of Fano, were invited by Malatestino da Rimini to an entertainment, on pretence that he had some important business to transact with them ; and, according to instructions given by him, they were drowned in their passage near Cattolica, between Rimini and Fano.

<sup>3</sup> *Out of life's tenement.]* "Fuor di lor vasello," is construed by the old Latin annotator on the Monte Casino MS. and by Lombardi, "out of the ship." Volpi understands "vasello" to mean "their city or country." Others take the word in the sense according to which, though not without some doubt, it is rendered in this translation.

That they shall need not 'gainst Focara's  
wind <sup>1</sup>

Offer up vow nor prayer." I answering thus :  
" Declare, as thou dost wish that I above  
May carry tidings of thee, who is he,  
In whom that sight doth wake such sad re-  
membrance."

Forthwith he laid his hand on the cheek-bone  
Of one, his fellow-spirit, and his jaws  
Expanding, cried : " Lo ! this is he I wot of :  
He speaks not for himself : the outcast this,  
Who overwhelm'd the doubt in Cæsar's mind,<sup>2</sup>  
Affirming that delay to men prepared  
Was ever harmful." Oh ! how terrified  
Methought was Curio, from whose throat was  
cut

The tongue, which spake that hardy word.

Then one,  
Maim'd of each hand, uplifted in the gloom  
The bleeding stumps, that they with gory  
spots  
Sullied his face, and cried : " Remember thee

<sup>1</sup> *Focara's wind.*] Focara is a mountain, from which a wind blows that is peculiarly dangerous to the navigators of that coast.

<sup>2</sup> *The doubt in Cæsar's mind.*] Curio, whose speech (according to Lucan) determined Julius Cæsar to proceed when he had arrived at Rimini (the ancient Ariminum), and doubted whether he should prosecute the civil war.

Of Mosca<sup>1</sup> too ; I who, alas ! exclaim'd,  
 'The deed once done, there is an end,' that  
 proved

A seed of sorrow to the Tuscan race."

I added : "Ay, and death to thine own tribe."

Whence, heaping woe on woe, he hurried  
 off,

As one grief-stung to madness. But I thiere  
 Still linger'd to behold the troop, and saw  
 Thing, such as I may fear without more proof  
 To tell of, but that conscience makes me firm,  
 The boon companion, who her strong breast-  
 plate

Buckles on him, that feels no guilt within,  
 And bids him on and fear not. Without  
 doubt

I saw, and yet it seems to pass before me,  
 A headless trunk, that even as the rest  
 Of the sad flock paced onward. By the hair

<sup>1</sup> *Mosca.*] Buondelmonte was engaged to marry a lady of the Amidei family, but broke his promise, and united himself to one of the Donati. This was so much resented by the former, that a meeting of themselves and their kinsmen was held, to consider of the best means of revenging the insult. Mosca degli Uberti, or de' Lamberti, persuaded them to resolve on the assassination of Buondelmonte, exclaiming to them, "The thing once done, there is an end." The counsel and its effects were the source of many terrible calamities to the state of Florence. "This murder," says G. Villani, lib. 5. cap. xxxviii., "was the cause and the beginning of the accursed Guelph and Ghibelline parties in Florence." It happened in 1215.

It bore the sever'd member, lantern-wise  
 Pendent in hand, which look'd at us, and said,  
 " Woe's me ! " The spirit lighted thus himself ;  
 And two there were in one, and one in two.  
 How that may be, he knows who ordereth  
 so.

When at the bridge's foot direct he stood,  
 His arm aloft he rear'd, thrusting the head  
 Full in our view, that nearer we might hear  
 The words, which thus it utter'd : " Now  
 behold  
 This grievous torment, thou, who breathing  
 go'st  
 To spy the dead : behold, if any else  
 Be terrible as this. And, that on earth  
 Thou mayst bear tidings of me, know that I  
 Am Bertrand,<sup>1</sup> he of Born, who gave king  
 John  
 The counsel mischievous. Father and son  
 I set at mutual war. For Absalom  
 And David more did not Ahitophel,  
 Spurring them on maliciously to strife.  
 For parting those so closely knit, my brain

---

<sup>1</sup> *Bertrand.*] Bertrand de Born, Vicomte de Hautefort, near Perigueux in Guienne, who incited John to rebel against his father, Henry II of England. Bertrand holds a distinguished place among the Provençal poets.

Parted, alas ! I carry from its source,  
That in this trunk inhabits. Thus the law  
Of retribution fiercely works in me."

---

## CANTO XXIX

---

### Argument.

Dante, at the desire of Virgil, proceeds onward to the bridge that crosses the tenth gulf, from whence he hears the cries of the alchemists and forgers, who are tormented therein ; but not being able to discern any thing on account of the darkness, they descend the rock, that bounds this the last of the compartments in which the eighth circle is divided, and then behold the spirits who are afflicted by divers plagues and diseases. Two of them, namely, Grifolino of Arezzo and Capocchio of Sienna, are introduced speaking.

So were mine eyes inebriate with the view  
Of the vast multitude, whom various wounds  
Disfigured, that they long'd to stay and weep.

But Virgil roused me : " What yet gazest  
on ?

Wherefore doth fasten yet thy sight below  
Among the maim'd and miserable shades ?  
Thou hast not shown in any chasm beside  
This weakness. Know, if thou wouldest  
number them,

That two and twenty miles the valley winds

Its circuit, and already is the moon  
 Beneath our feet : the time permitted now  
 Is short ; and more, not seen, remains to see."

" If thou," I straight replied, " hadst  
 weigh'd the cause,  
 For which I look'd, thou hadst perchance  
 excused

The tarrying still." My leader part pursued  
 His way, the while I follow'd, answering him,  
 And adding thus : " Within that cave I deem,  
 Whereon so fixedly I held my ken,  
 There is a spirit dwells, one of my blood,  
 Wailing the crime that costs him now so  
 dear."

Then spake my master : " Let thy soul  
 no more  
 Afflict itself for him. Direct elsewhere  
 Its thought, and leave him. At the bridge's  
 foot

I mark'd how he did point with menacing look  
 At thee, and heard him by the others named  
 Geri of Bello.<sup>1</sup> Thou so wholly then  
 Wert busied with his spirit, who once ruled

<sup>1</sup> *Geri of Bello.*] A kinsman of the Poet's, who was murdered by one of the Sacchetti family. His being placed here, may be considered as a proof that Dante was more impartial in the allotment of his punishments than has generally been supposed. He was the son of Bello, who was brother to Bellincione, our Poet's grandfather.

The towers of Hautefort, that thou lookedst  
not

That way, ere he was gone."—"O guide  
beloved !

His violent death yet unavenged," said I,  
" By any, who are partners in his shame,  
Made him contemptuous ; therefore, as I  
think,

He pass'd me speechless by ; and, doing so,  
Hath made me more compassionate his fate."

So we discoursed to where the rock first  
show'd

The other valley, had more light been there,  
E'en to the lowest depth. Soon as we came  
O'er the last cloister in the dismal rounds  
Of Malebolge, and the brotherhood  
Were to our view exposed, then many a dart  
Of sore lament assail'd me, headed all  
With points of thrilling pity, that I closed  
Both ears against the volley with mine hands.

As were the torment, if each lazar-house  
Of Valdichiana<sup>1</sup> in the sultry time

<sup>1</sup> *Of Valdichiana.*] The valley through which passes the river Chiana, bounded by Arezzo, Cortona, Monte-pulciano, and Chiusi. In the heat of autumn it was formerly rendered unwholesome by the stagnation of the water, but has since been drained by the Emperor Leopold II. The Chiana is mentioned as a remarkably sluggish stream, in the *Paradiso*, Canto xiii. 21.

'Twixt July and September, with the isle  
 Sardinia and Maremma's pestilent fen,<sup>1</sup>  
 Had heap'd their maladies all in one foss  
 Together ; such was here the torment : dire  
 The stench, as issuing steams from fester'd  
 limbs.

We on the utmost shore of the long rock  
 Descended still to leftward. Then my sight  
 Was livelier to explore the depth, wherein  
 The minister of the most mighty Lord,  
 All searching Justice, dooms to punishment  
 The forgers noted on her dread record.

More rueful was it not methinks to see  
 The nation in Ægina <sup>2</sup> droop, what time  
 Each living thing, e'en to the little worm,  
 All fell, so full of malice was the air  
 (And afterward, as bards of yore have told,  
 The ancient people were restored anew  
 From seed of emmets), than was here to see  
 The spirits, that languish'd through the murky  
 vale,  
 Up-piled on many a stack. Confused they  
 lay,  
 One o'er the belly, o'er the shoulders one

<sup>1</sup> *Maremma's pestilent fen.*] See Note to Canto xxv.  
 v. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *In Ægina.*] He alludes to the fable of the ants  
 changed into Myrmidons. Ovid, *Met.* lib. 7.

Roll'd of another ; sideling crawl'd a third  
Along the dismal pathway. Step by step  
We journey'd on, in silence looking round,  
And listening those diseased, who strove in vain  
To lift their forms. Then two I mark'd, that  
sat

Propt 'gainst each other, as two brazen pans  
Set to retain the heat. From head to foot,  
A tetter bark'd them round. Nor saw I e'er  
Groom currying so fast, for whom his lord  
Impatient waited, or himself perchance  
Tired with long watching, as of these each one  
Plied quickly his keen nails, through furious-  
ness

Of ne'er abated pruriency. The crust  
Came drawn from underneath in flakes, like  
scales

Scraped from the bream, or fish of broader  
mail.

“ O thou ! who with thy fingers rendest  
off

Thy coat of proof,” thus spake my guide to one,  
“ And sometimes makest tearing pincers of  
them,

Tell me if any born of Latian land  
Be among these within : so may thy nails  
Serve thee for everlasting to this toil.”

“ Both are of Latium,” weeping he replied,

" Whom tortured thus thou seest : but who art thou  
 That hast inquired of us ? " To whom my guide :  
 " One that descend with this man, who yet lives,  
 From rock to rock, and show him hell's abyss."

Then started they asunder, and each turn'd Trembling toward us, with the rest, whose ear Those words redounding struck. To me my liege

Address'd him : " Speak to them whate'er thou list."

And I therewith began : " So may no time Filch your remembrance from the thoughts of men

In the upper world, but after many suns Survive it, as ye tell me, who ye are, And of what race ye come. Your punishment, Unseemly and disgusting in its kind, Deter you not from opening thus much to me."

" Arezzo was my dwelling," <sup>1</sup> answer'd one,  
 " And me Albero of Sienna brought  
 To die by fire : but that, for which I died,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Arezzo was my dwelling.*] Grifolino of Arezzo, who promised Albero, son of the Bishop of Sienna, that he would teach him the art of flying ; and, because he did not keep his promise, Albero prevailed on his father to have him burnt for a necromancer.

Leads me not here. True is, in sport I told  
him,

That I had learn'd to wing my flight in air ;  
And he, admiring much, as he was void  
Of wisdom, will'd me to declare to him  
The secret of mine art : and only hence,  
Because I made him not a Dædalus,  
Prevail'd on one supposed his sire to burn me  
But Minos to this chasm, last of the ten,  
For that I practised alchemy on earth,  
Has doom'd me. Him no subterfuge eludes.'

Then to the bard I spake : " Was ever race  
Light as Sienna's ? <sup>1</sup> Sure not France herself  
Can show a tribe so frivolous and vain."

The other leprous spirit heard my words,  
And thus return'd : " Be Stricca <sup>2</sup> from this  
charge

<sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ *Was ever race*

*Light as Sienna's ?]* The same imputation is again cast on the Siennese, *Purg.* Canto xiii. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *Stricca.]* This is said ironically. Stricca, Niccolo Salimbeni, Caccia of Asciano, and Abbagliato or Meo de' Folcachieri, belonged to a company of prodigal and luxurious young men in Sienna, called the "*brigata godereccia*." Niccolo was the inventor of a new manner of using cloves in cookery, not very well understood by the commentators, and which was termed the "*costuma ricca*." Pagliarini, in his *Historical Observations on the Quadrilatero*, lib. 3, cap. xiii., adduces a passage from a MS. History of Sienna, in which it is told that these spendthrifts, out of the sum raised from the sale of their estates, built a palace, which they inhabited in common, and made the receptacle of their apparatus for luxurious enjoyment ; and that,

Exempted, he who knew so temperately  
 To lay out fortune's gifts ; and Niccolo,  
 Who first the spice's costly luxury  
 Discover'd in that garden,<sup>1</sup> where such seed  
 Roots deepest in the soil ; and be that troop  
 Exempted, with whom Caccia of Asciano  
 Lavish'd his vineyards and wide-spreading  
 woods,  
 And his rare wisdom Abbagliato show'd  
 A spectacle for all. That thou mayst know  
 Who seconds thee against the Siennese  
 Thus gladly, bend this way thy sharpen'd sight,  
 That well my face may answer to thy ken ;  
 So shalt thou see I am Capocchio's ghost,<sup>2</sup>  
 Who forged transmuted metals by the power  
 Of alchemy ; and if I scan thee right,  
 Thou needs must well remember how I aped  
 Creative nature by my subtle art."

amongst their other extravagancies, they had their horses shod with silver, and forbade their servants to pick up the precious shoes if they dropped off. The end was, as might be expected, extreme poverty and wretchedness.

<sup>1</sup> In that garden.] Sienna.

<sup>2</sup> Capocchio's ghost.] Capocchio of Sienna, who is said to have been a fellow-student of Dante's, in natural philosophy.

## CANTO XXX

---

Argument,

In the same gulf, other kinds of impostors, as those who have counterfeited the persons of others, or debased the current coin, or deceived by speech under false pretences, are described as suffering various diseases. Sinon of Troy and Adamo of Brescia mutually reproach each other with their several impostures.

WHAT time resentment burn'd in Juno's breast  
 For Semele against the Theban blood,  
 As more than once in dire mischance was  
     rued ;

Such fatal frenzy seized on Athamas,<sup>1</sup>  
 That he his spouse beholding with a babe  
 Laden on either arm, "Spread out," he cried,  
 "The meshes, that I take the lioness  
 And the young lions at the pass :" then forth  
 Stretch'd he his merciless talons, grasping one,  
 One helpless innocent, Learchus named,  
 Whom swinging down he dash'd upon a rock ;  
 And with her other burden, self-destroy'd,  
 The hapless mother plunged. And when the  
     pride

Of all presuming Troy fell from its height,  
 By fortune overwhelm'd, and the old king

---

<sup>1</sup> *Athamas.*] From Ovid, *Metam.* lib. 4 : Protinus  
 Æolides, etc.

With his realm perish'd ; then did Hecuba,  
 A wretch forlorn and captive, when she saw  
 Polyxena first slaughter'd, and her son,  
 Her Polydorus, on the wild sea-beach  
 Next met the mourner's view, then reft of  
 sense

Did she run barking even as a dog ;  
 Such mighty power had grief to wrench her  
 soul.

But ne'er the Furies, or of Thebes, or Troy,  
 With such fell cruelty were seen, their goads  
 Infixing in the limbs of man or beast,  
 As now two pale and naked ghosts I saw,  
 That gnarling wildly scamper'd, like the swine  
 Excluded from his sty. One reach'd Capoc-  
 chio,

And in the neck-joint sticking deep his fangs,  
 Dragg'd him, that, o'er the solid pavement  
 rubb'd

His belly stretch'd out prone. The other  
 shape,

He of Arezzo, there left trembling, spake :  
 " That sprite of air is Schicchi ; <sup>1</sup> in like mood

---

<sup>1</sup> *Schicchi.*] Gianni Schicchi, who was of the family of Cavalcanti, possessed such a faculty of moulding his features to the resemblance of others, that he was employed by Simon Donati to personate Buoso Donati, then recently deceased, and to make a will, leaving Simon his heir; for which service he was remunerated with a mare of extraordinary value, here called " the lady of the herd."

Of random mischief vents he still his spite."

To whom I answering : " Oh ! as thou dost  
hope

The other may not flesh its jaws on thee,  
Be patient to inform us, who it is,  
Ere it speed hence."—" That is the ancient soul  
Of wretched Myrrha," he replied, " who burn'd  
With most unholy flame for her own sire,  
And a false shape assuming, so perform'd  
The deed of sin ; e'en as the other there,  
That onward passes, dared to counterfeit  
Donati's features, to feign'd testament  
The seal affixing, that himself might gain,  
For his own share, the lady of the herd."

When vanish'd the two furious shades, on  
whom

Mine eye was held, I turned it back to view  
The other cursed spirits. One I saw  
In fashion like a lute, had but the groin  
Been sever'd where it meets the forked part.  
Swoln dropsy, disproportioning the limbs  
With ill converted moisture, that the paunch  
Suits not the visage, open'd wide his lips,  
Gasping as in the hectic man for drought,  
One towards the chin, the other upward curl'd.

" O ye ! who in this world of misery,  
Wherfore I know not, are exempt from pain,"  
Thus he began, " attentively regard

Adamo's woe.<sup>1</sup> When living, full supply  
Ne'er lack'd me of what most I coveted ;  
One drop of water now, alas ! I crave.

The rills, that glitter down the grassy slopes  
Of Casentino,<sup>2</sup> making fresh and soft  
The banks whereby they glide to Arno's stream,  
Stand ever in my view ; and not in vain ;  
For more the pictured semblance dries me up,  
Much more than the disease, which makes the  
flesh

Desert these shrivel'd cheeks. So from the  
place,

Where I transgress'd, stern justice urging me,  
Takes means to quicken more my labouring  
sighs.

There is Romena, where I falsified  
The metal with the Baptist's form imprest.  
For which on earth I left my body burnt.  
But if I here might see the sorrowing soul  
Of Guido, Alessandro, or their brother,  
For Branda's limpid spring<sup>3</sup> I would not  
change

<sup>1</sup> *Adamo's woe.*] Adamo of Brescia, at the instigation of Guido, Alessandro, and their brother Aghinulfo, lords of Romena, counterfeited the coin of Florence ; for which crime he was burnt. Landino says, that in his time the peasants still pointed out a pile of stones near Romena, as the place of his execution.

<sup>2</sup> *Casentino.*] Romena is a part of Casentino.

<sup>3</sup> *Branda's limpid spring.*] A fountain in Sienna.

The welcome sight. One is e'en now within,  
If truly the mad spirits tell, that round  
Are wandering. But wherein besteads me  
that ?

My limbs are fetter'd. Were I but so light,  
That I each hundred years might move one  
inch,

I had set forth already on this path,  
Seeking him out amidst the shapeless crew,  
Although eleven miles it wind, not less  
Than half of one across. They brought me  
down

Among this tribe ; induced by them, I stamp'd  
The florens with three carats of alloy." <sup>1</sup>

" Who are that abject pair," I next inquired,  
" That closely bounding thee upon thy right  
Lie smoking, like a hand in winter steep'd  
In the chill stream ? "—" When to this gulf  
I dropp'd,"

He answer'd, " here I found them ; since that  
hour

They have not turn'd, nor ever shall, I ween,  
Till time hath run his course. One is that  
dame,

---

<sup>1</sup> *The florens with three carats of alloy.*] The floren was a coin that ought to have had twenty-four carats of pure gold. Villani relates, that it was first used at Florence in 1252, an era of great prosperity in the annals of the Republic; before which time their most valuable coinage was of silver. *Hist. lib. 6. cap. liv.*

The false accuser<sup>1</sup> of the Hebrew youth ;  
 Sinon the other, that false Greek from Troy.  
 Sharp fever drains the reeky moistness out,  
 In such a cloud upstream'd." When that he  
 heard,

One, gall'd perchance to be so darkly named,  
 With clench'd hand smote him on the braced  
 paunch,

That like a drum resounded : but forthwith  
 Adamo smote him on the face, the blow  
 Returning with his arm, that seem'd as hard.

" Though my o'erweighty limbs have ta'en  
 from me

The power to move," said he, " I have an arm  
 At liberty for such employ." To whom  
 Was answer'd : " When thou wentest to the  
 fire,

Thou hadst it not so ready at command,  
 Then readier when it coin'd the impostor gold."

And thus the dropsied : " Ay, now speak'st  
 thou true :

But there thou gavest not such true testimony,  
 When thou wast question'd of the truth, at  
 Troy."

" If I spake false, thou falsely stamp'dst  
 the coin,"

Said Sinon ; " I am here for but one fault,

---

<sup>1</sup> *The false accuser.] Potiphar's wife.*

And thou for more than any imp beside."

"Remember," he relied, "O perjured one !  
The horse remember, that did teem with death ;  
And all the world is witness to thy guilt."

"To thine," return'd the Greek, "witness  
the thirst

Whence thy tongue cracks, witness the fluid  
mound

Rear'd by thy belly up before thine eyes,  
A mass corrupt." To whom the coiner thus :  
"Thy mouth gapes wide as ever to let pass  
Its evil saying. Me if thirst assails,  
Yet I am stuft with moisture. Thou art  
parch'd ;

Pains rack thy head : no urging wouldest thou  
need

To make thee lap Narcissus' mirror up."

I was all fix'd to listen, when my guide  
Admonish'd : "Now beware. A little more  
And I do quarrel with thee." I perceived  
How angrily he spake, and towards him turn'd  
With shame so poignant, as remember'd yet  
Confounds me. As a man that dreams of  
harm

Befallen him, dreaming wishes it a dream,  
And that which is, desires as if it were not ;  
Such then was I, who, wanting power to speak,  
Wish'd to excuse myself, and all the while

Excused me, though unweeting that I did.

“ More grievous fault than thine has been,  
    less shame,”

My master cried, “ might expiate. Therefore  
    cast

All sorrow from thy soul ; and if again  
Chance bring thee, where like conference is held  
Think I am ever at thy side. To hear  
Such wrangling is a joy for vulgar minds.”

---

### CANTO XXXI

---

#### Argument.

The poets, following the sound of a loud horn, are led by it to the ninth circle, in which there are four rounds, one enclosed within the other, and containing as many sorts of Traitors ; but the present Canto shows only that the circle is encompassed with Giants, one of whom, Antæus, takes them both in his arms and places them at the bottom of the circle.

THE very tongue, whose keen reproof before  
Had wounded me, that either cheek was  
    stain'd,

Now minister'd my cure. So have I heard,  
Achilles' and his father's javelin caused  
Pain first, and then the boon of health restored.

    Turning our back upon the vale of woe,  
We cross'd the encircled mound in silence.

There

Was less than day and less than night, that far  
Mine eye advanced not: but I heard a horn  
Sounded so loud, the peal it rang had made  
The thunder feeble. Following its course  
The adverse way, my strained eyes were bent  
On that one spot. So terrible a blast  
Orlando blew not, when that dismal rout  
O'erthrew the host of Charlemain, and quench'd  
His saintly warfare. Thitherward not long  
My head was raised, when many a lofty tower  
Methought I spied. "Master," said I, "what  
land

Is this?" He answer'd straight: "Too long  
a space

Of intervening darkness has thine eye  
To traverse: thou hast therefore widely err'd  
In thy imagining. Thither arrived  
Thou well shalt see, how distance can delude  
The sense. A little therefore urge thee on."

Then tenderly he caught me by the hand;  
"Yet know," said he, "ere farther we advance,  
That it less strange may seem, these are not  
towers,

But giants. In the pit they stand immersed,  
Each from his navel downward, round the  
bank."

As when a fog disperseth gradually,  
Our vision traces what the mist involves

Condensed in air ; so piercing through the gross  
And gloomy atmosphere, as more and more  
We near'd toward the brink, mine error fled  
And fear came o'er me. As with circling  
round

Of turrets, Montereggion<sup>1</sup> crowns his walls ;  
E'en thus the shore, encompassing the abyss,  
Was turreted with giants, half their length  
Uprearing, horrible, whom Jove from heaven  
Yet threatens, when his muttering thunder  
rolls.

Of one already I descried the face,  
Shoulders, and breast, and of the belly huge  
Great part, and both arms down along his ribs.

All-teeming Nature, when her plastic hand  
Left framing of these monsters, did display  
Past doubt her wisdom, taking from mad War  
Such slaves to do his bidding ; and if she  
Repent her not of the elephant and whale,  
Who ponders well confesses her therein  
Wiser and more discreet ; for when brute force  
And evil will are back'd with subtlety,  
Resistance none avails. His visage seem'd  
In length and bulk, as doth the pine<sup>2</sup> that  
tops

---

<sup>1</sup> *Montereggion.*] A castle near Sienna.

<sup>2</sup> *The pine.*] "The large pine of bronze, which once  
ornamented the top of the mole of Adrian, was afterwards

Saint Peter's Roman fane ; and the other bones  
 Of like proportion, so that from above  
 The bank, which girdled him below, such  
 height

Arose his stature, that three Friezlanders  
 Had striven in vain to reach but to his hair.  
 Full thirty ample palms was he exposed  
 Downward from whence a man his garment  
 loops.

“ Raphel <sup>1</sup> baï ameth, sabì almi : ”

So shouted his fierce lips, which sweeter hymns  
 Became not ; and my guide address'd him thus :  
 “ O senseless spirit ! let thy horn for thee  
 Interpret : therewith vent thy rage, if rage  
 Or other passion wring thee. Search thy neck,  
 There shalt thou find the belt that binds it on.  
 Spirit confused ! lo, on thy mighty breast  
 Where hangs the baldric ! ” Then to me he  
 spake :

“ He doth accuse himself. Nimrod is this,  
 Through whose ill counsel in the world no more

---

employed to decorate the top of the belfry of St. Peter ; and having (according to Buti) been thrown down by the lightning, it was, after lying some time on the steps of this palace, transferred to the place where it now is, in the Pope's garden, by the side of the great corridore of Belvedere. In the time of our Poet, the pine was then either on the belfry or on the steps of St. Peter.” Lombardi.

<sup>1</sup> *Raphel, etc.]* These unmeaning sounds, it is supposed, are meant to express the confusion of languages at the building of the tower of Babel.

One tongue prevails. But pass we on, nor  
waste

Our words ; for so each language is to him,  
As his to others, understood by none."

Then to the leftward turning sped we forth,  
And at a sling's throw found another shade  
Far fiercer and more huge. I cannot say  
What master hand had girt him ; but he held  
Behind the right arm fetter'd, and before,  
The other, with a chain, that fasten'd him  
From the neck down ; and five times round his  
form

Apparent met the wreathed links. " This  
proud one

Would of his strength against almighty Jove  
Make trial," said my guide : " whence he is  
thus

Requited : Ephialtes him they call.

Great was his prowess, when the giants brought  
Fear on the gods : those arms, which then he  
plied,

Now moves he never." Forthwith I return'd :  
" Fain would I, if 't were possible, mine eyes,  
Of Briareus immeasurable, gain'd  
Experience next." He answer'd : " Thou  
shalt see

Not far from hence Antæus, who both speaks  
And is unfetter'd, who shall place us there

Where guilt is at its depth. Far onward stands  
Whom thou wouldest fain behold, in chains, and  
made

Like to this spirit, save that in his looks  
More fell he seems." By violent earthquake  
rock'd

Ne'er shook a tower, so reeling to its base,  
As Ephialtes. More than ever then  
I dreaded death ; nor than the terror more  
Had needed, if I had not seen the cords  
That held him fast. We, straightway journey-  
ing on,

Came to Antæus, who, five ells complete  
Without the head, forth issued from the cave.  
" O thou, who in the fortunate vale,<sup>1</sup> that made  
Great Scipio heir of glory, when his sword  
Drove back the troop of Hannibal in flight,  
Who thence of old didst carry for thy spoil  
An hundred lions ; and if thou hadst fought  
In the high conflict on thy brethren's side,  
Seems as men yet believed, that through thine  
arm

The sons of earth had conquer'd ; now vouch-  
safe

To place us down beneath, where numbing cold  
Locks up Cocytus. Force not that we crave

---

<sup>1</sup> *The fortunate vale.*] The country near Carthage.

Or Tityus' help or Typhon's. Here is one  
 Can give what in this realm ye covet. Stoop  
 Therefore, nor scornfully distort thy lip.  
 He in the upper world can yet bestow  
 Renown on thee ; for he doth live, and looks  
 For life yet longer, if before the time  
 Grace call him not unto herself." Thus spake  
 The teacher. He in haste forth stretch'd his  
 hands,

And caught my guide. Alcides<sup>1</sup> whilom felt  
 That grapple, straiten'd sore. Soon as my guide  
 Had felt it, he bespake me thus : " This way,  
 That I may clasp thee ; " then so caught me up,  
 That we were both one burden. As appears  
 The tower of Carisenda<sup>2</sup> from beneath  
 Where it doth lean, if chance a passing cloud  
 So sail across, that opposite it hangs ;  
 Such then Antæus seem'd, as at mine ease  
 I mark'd him stooping. I were fain at times  
 To have past another way. Yet in the abyss,  
 That Lucifer with Judas low ingulfs,  
 Lightly he placed us ; nor, there leaning, stay'd ;  
 But rose, as in a bark the stately mast.

<sup>1</sup> *Alcides.*] The combat between Hercules and Antæus is adduced by the poet in his treatise *De Monarchia*, lib. 2., as a proof of the judgment of God displayed in the duel, according to the singular superstition of those times.

<sup>2</sup> *The tower of Carisenda.*] The leaning tower at Bologna.

## CANTO XXXII

## Argument,

This Canto treats of the first, and, in part, of the second of those rounds, into which the ninth and last, or frozen circle, is divided. In the former, called Caïna, Dante finds Cainicione de' Pazzi, who gives him an account of other sinners who are there punished ; and in the next, named Antenora, he hears in like manner from Bocca degli Abbati who his fellow-sufferers are.

COULD I command rough rhymes and hoarse,  
to suit

That hole of sorrow o'er which every rock  
His firm abutment rears, then might the vein  
Of fancy rise full springing : but not mine  
Such measures, and with faltering awe I touch  
The mighty theme ; for to describe the depth  
Of all the universe, is no emprise

To jest with, and demands a tongue not used  
To infant babbling. But let them assist  
My song, the tuneful maidens, by whose aid  
Amphion wall'd in Thebes ; so with the truth  
My speech shall best accord. Oh, ill-starr'd  
folk,

Beyond all others wretched ! who abide  
In such a mansion, as scarce thought finds words  
To speak of, better had ye here on earth  
Been flocks, or mountain goats. As down we  
stood

In the dark pit beneath the giants' feet,  
 But lower far than they, and I did gaze  
 Still on the lofty battlement, a voice  
 Bespoke me thus : " Look how thou walkest.

Take

Good heed, thy soles do tread not on the heads  
 Of thy poor brethren." Thereupon I turn'd  
 And saw before and underneath my feet  
 A lake,<sup>1</sup> whose frozen surface liker seem'd  
 To glass than water. Not so thick a veil  
 In winter e'er hath Austrian Danube spread  
 O'er his still course, nor Tanais far remote  
 Under the chilling sky. Roll'd o'er that mass  
 Had Tabernich or Pietrapana <sup>2</sup> fallen,  
 Not e'en its rim had creak'd As peeps the  
 frog

Croaking above the wave, what time in dreams  
 The village gleaner oft pursues her toil,  
 So, to where modest shame appears,<sup>3</sup> thus low

<sup>1</sup> *A lake.*] The same torment is introduced into the *Edda*, compiled in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Indeed, as an escape from "the penalty of Adam, the season's difference," forms one of the most natural topics of consolation for the loss of life, so does a renewal of that suffering in its fiercest extremes of heat and cold bring before the imagination of men in general (except indeed the terrors of a self-accusing conscience) the liveliest idea of future punishment.

<sup>2</sup> *Tabernich or Pietrapana.*] The one a mountain in Sclavonia, the other in that tract of country called the Garfagnana, not far from Lucca.

<sup>3</sup> *To where modest shame appears.*] "As high as to the face."

Blue pinch'd and shrined in ice the spirits  
stood,

Moving their teeth in shrill note like the stork.  
His face each downward held ; their mouth the  
cold,

Their eyes express'd the dolour of their heart.

A space I look'd around, then at my feet  
Saw two so strictly join'd, that of their head  
The very hairs were mingled. "Tell me ye,  
Whose bosoms thus together press," said I,  
"Who are ye?" At that sound their necks  
they bent ;

And when their looks were lifted up to me,  
Straightway their eyes, before all moist within,  
Distill'd upon their lips, and the frost bound  
The tears betwixt these orbs, and held them  
there.

Plank unto plank hath never cramp closed up  
So stoutly. Whence, like two enraged goats,  
They clash'd together : them such fury seized

And one, from whom the cold both ears had  
reft,

Exclaim'd, still looking downward : "Why on  
us

Dost speculate so long ? If thou wouldest know  
Who are these two,<sup>1</sup> the valley, whence his  
wave

---

<sup>1</sup> Who are these two.] Alessandro and Napoleone, sons

Bisenzio slopes, did for its master own  
 Their sire Alberto, and next him themselves.  
 They from one body issued ; and throughout  
 Caïna thou mayst search, nor find a shade  
 More worthy in congealment to be fix'd ;  
 Not him,<sup>1</sup> whose breast and shadow Arthur's  
 hand

At that one blow dissever'd ; not Focaccia ;<sup>2</sup>  
 No, not this spirit, whose o'erjutting head  
 Obstructs my onward view : he bore the name  
 Of Mascheroni :<sup>3</sup> Tuscan if thou be,  
 Well knowest who he was. And to cut short  
 All further question, in my form behold  
 What once was Camiccione.<sup>4</sup> I await  
 Carlino<sup>5</sup> here my kinsman, whose deep guilt

of Alberto Alberti, who murdered each other. They were proprietors of the valley of Falterona, where the Bisenzio has its source, a river that falls into the Arno about six miles from Florence.

<sup>1</sup> *Not him.]* Mordrec, son of King Arthur. In the romance of Lancelot of the Lake, Arthur, having discovered the traitorous intentions of his son, pierces him through with the stroke of his lance, so that the sunbeam passes through the body of Mordrec ; and this disruption of the shadow is no doubt what our Poet alludes to in the text.

<sup>2</sup> *Focaccia.]* Focaccia of Cancellieri (the Pistoian family), whose atrocious act of revenge against his uncle is said to have given rise to the parties of the Bianchi and Neri, in the year 1300.

<sup>3</sup> *Mascheroni.]* Sassol Mascheroni, a Florentine, who also murdered his uncle.

<sup>4</sup> *Camiccione.]* Camiccione de' Pazzi of Valdarno, by whom his kinsman Ubertino was treacherously put to death.

<sup>5</sup> *Carlino.]* One of the same family. He betrayed the

Shall wash out mine." A thousand visages  
Then mark'd I, which the keen and eager cold  
Had shaped into a doggish grin ; whence creeps  
A shivering horror o'er me, at the thought  
Of those frore shallows. While we journey'd  
on

Toward the middle, at whose point unites  
All heavy substance, and I trembling went  
Through that eternal chillness, I know not  
If will it were, or destiny, or chance,  
But, passing 'midst the heads, my foot did  
strike

With violent blow against the face of one.

" Wherefore dost bruise me ? " weeping he  
exclaim'd.

" Unless thy errand be some fresh revenge  
For Montaperto,<sup>1</sup> wherefore troublest me ? "

I thus : " Instructor, now await me here,  
That I through him may rid me of my doubt :  
Thenceforth what haste thou wilt." The  
teacher paused ;

Castel di Piano Travigne, in Valdarno, to the Florentines, after the refugees of the Bianca and Ghibelline party had defended it against a siege for twenty nine days, in the summer of 1302.

<sup>1</sup> *Montaperto.*] The defeat of the Guelfi at Montaperto, occasioned by the treachery of Bocca degli Abati, who, during the engagement, cut off the hand of Giacopo del Vacca de' Pazzi, bearer of the Florentine standard. This event happened in 1260.

And to that shade I spake, who bitterly  
Still cursed me in his wrath. "What art thou,  
speak,

That railest thus on others?" He replied:  
"Now who art thou, that smiting others'  
cheeks,

Through Antenora<sup>1</sup> roamest, with such force  
As were past sufferance, wert thou living still?"

"And I am living, to thy joy perchance,"  
Was my reply, "if fame be dear to thee,  
That with the rest I may thy name enrol."

"The contrary of what I covet most,"  
Said he, "thou tender'st: hence! nor vex me  
more.

I'll knowest thou to flatter in this vale."

Then seizing on his hinder scalp I cried:  
"Name thee, or not a hair shall tarry here."

"Rend all away," he answer'd, "yet for  
that

I will not tell, nor show thee, who I am,  
Though at my head thou pluck a thousand  
times."

Now I had grasp'd his tresses, and stript off  
More than one tuft, he barking, with his eyes  
Drawn in and downward, when another cried,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Antenora.*] So called from Antenor, who betrayed Troy his country.

" What ails thee, Bocca ? Sound not loud enough

Thy chattering teeth, but thou must bark outright ?

What devil wrings thee ?"—“ Now,” said I,  
“ be dumb,

Accursed traitor ! To thy shame, of thee  
True tidings will I bear.”—“ Off ! ” he replied ;  
“ Tell what thou list : but, as thou scape from  
hence,

To speak of him whose tongue hath been so  
glib,

Forget not : here he wails the Frenchman’s  
gold.

‘ Him of Duera,’<sup>1</sup> thou canst say, ‘ I marked,  
‘ Where the starved sinners pine.’ If thou be  
ask’d

What other shade was with them, at thy side  
Is Beccaria,<sup>2</sup> whose red gorge distain’d  
The biting axe of Florence. Farther on,  
If I misdeem not, Soldanieri<sup>3</sup> bides,

<sup>1</sup> *Him of Duera.*] Buoso of Cremona, of the family of Duera, who was bribed by Guy de Montfort to leave a pass between Piedmont and Parma, with the defence of which he had been intrusted by the Ghibellines, open to the army of Charles of Anjou, A.D. 1265, at which the people of Cremona were so enraged, that they extirpated the whole family.

<sup>2</sup> *Beccaria.*] Abbot of Vallombrosa, who was the Pope’s legate at Florence, where his intrigues in favour of the Ghibellines being discovered, he was beheaded.

<sup>3</sup> *Soldanieri.*] “ Gianni Soldanieri,” says Villani, *Hist.*

With Ganellon,<sup>1</sup> and Tribaldello,<sup>2</sup> him  
Who oped Faenza when the people slept."

We now had left him, passing on our way,  
When I beheld two spirits by the ice  
Pent in one hollow, that the head of one  
Was cowl unto the other ; and as bread  
Is raven'd up through hunger, the uppermost  
Did so apply his fangs to the other's brain,  
Where the spine joins it. Not more furiously  
On Menalippus' temples Tydeus<sup>3</sup> gnaw'd,  
Than on that skull and on its garbage he.

" O thou ! who show'st so beastly sign of hate  
'Gainst him thou prey'st on, let me hear,"  
said I,

" The cause, on such condition, that if right  
Warrant thy grievance, knowing who ye are,  
And what the colour of his sinning was,  
I may repay thee in the world above,  
If that, wherewith I speak, be moist so long."

lib. 7. cap. xiv., " put himself at the head of the people, in the hopes of rising into power, not aware that the result would be mischief to the Ghibelline party, and his own ruin ; an event which seems ever to have befallen him who has headed the populace in Florence."—A.D. 1266.

<sup>1</sup> *Ganellon.*] The betrayer of Charlemain.

<sup>2</sup> *Tribaldello.*] Tribaldello de' Manfredi, who was bribed to betray the city of Faenza, A.D. 1282.

<sup>3</sup> *Tydeus.*] See Statius, *Theb.* lib. 8. ad finem.

## CANTO XXXIII

## Argument.

The Poet is told by Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi of the cruel manner in which he and his children were famished in the tower at Pisa, by command of the Archbishop Ruggieri. He next discourses of the third round, called Ptolomea, wherein those are punished who have betrayed others under the semblance of kindness ; and among these he finds the Friar Alberigo de' Manfredi, who tells him of one whose soul was already tormented in that place, though his body appeared still to be alive upon the earth, being yielded up to the governance of a fiend.

His jaws uplifting from their fell repast,  
That sinner wiped them on the hairs o' the  
head,

Which he behind had mangled, then began :  
“ Thy will obeying, I call up afresh  
Sorrow past cure ; which, but to think of,  
wrings

My heart, or ere I tell on 't. But if words,  
That I may utter, shall prove seed to bear  
Fruit of eternal infamy to him,  
The traitor whom I gnaw at, thou at once  
Shalt see me speak and weep. Who thou mayst  
be

I know not, nor how here below art come :  
But Florentine thou seemest of a truth,  
When I do hear thee. Know I was on earth

Count Ugolino,<sup>1</sup> and the Archbishop he  
Ruggieri. Why I neighbour him so close,  
Now list. That through effect of his ill thoughts  
In him my trust reposing, I was ta'en

*<sup>1</sup> Count Ugolino.]* “ In the year 1288, in the month of July, Pisa was much divided by competitors for the sovereignty ; one party, composed of certain of the Guelfi, being headed by the Judge Nino di Gallura de' Visconti ; another, consisting of others of the same faction, by the Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi ; and a third by the Archbishop Ruggieri degli Ubaldini, with the Lanfranchi, Sismondi, Gualandi, and other Ghibelline houses. The Count Ugolino, to effect his purpose, united with the Archbishop and his party, and having betrayed Nino, his sister's son, they contrived that he and his followers should either be driven out of Pisa, or their persons seized. Nino hearing this, and not seeing any means of defending himself, retired to Calci, his castle, and formed an alliance with the Florentines and people of Lucca against the Pisans. The Count, before Nino was gone, in order to cover his treachery, when everything was settled for his expulsion, quitted Pisa, and repaired to a manor of his called Settimo ; whence, as soon as he was informed of Nino's departure, he returned to Pisa with great rejoicing and festivity, and was elevated to the supreme power with every demonstration of triumph and honour. But his greatness was not of long continuance. It pleased the Almighty that a total reverse of fortune should ensue, as a punishment for his acts of treachery and guilt ; for he was said to have poisoned the Count Anselmo da Capracia, his sister's son, on account of the envy and fear excited in his mind by the high esteem in which the gracious manners of Anselmo were held by the Pisans.—The power of the Guelfi being so much diminished, the Archbishop devised means to betray the Count Ugolino, and caused him to be suddenly attacked in his palace by the fury of the people, whom he exasperated by telling them that Ugolino had betrayed Pisa, and given up their castles to the citizens of Florence and of Lucca. He was immediately compelled to surrender ; his bastard son and his grandson fell in the assault ; and two of his sons, with their two sons also, were conveyed to prison.” G. Villani, lib. 7. cap. cxx. “ In the follow-

And after murder'd, need is not I tell.  
What therefore thou canst not have heard, that  
is,

How cruel was the murder, shalt thou hear,  
And know if he had wrong'd me. A small  
grate

Within that mew, which for my sake the name  
Of famine bears, where others yet must pine,  
Already through its opening several moons  
Had shown me, when I slept the evil sleep  
That from the future tore the curtain off.  
This one, methought, as master of the sport  
Rode forth to chase the gaunt wolf, and his  
whelps,

Unto the mountain<sup>1</sup> which forbids the sight  
Of Lucca to the Pisan. With lean brachs  
Inquisitive and keen, before him ranged  
Lanfranchi with Sismondi and Gualandi.

ing March, the Pisans, who had imprisoned the Count Ugolino, with two of his sons and two of his grandchildren, the offspring of his son the Count Guelfo, in a tower on the Piazza of the Anziani, caused the tower to be locked, the key thrown into the Arno, and all food to be withheld from them. In a few days they died of hunger; but the Count first with loud cries declared his penitence, and yet neither priest nor friar was allowed to shrive him. All the five, when dead, were dragged out of the prison, and meanly interred; and from thenceforward the tower was called the tower of famine, and so shall ever be." *Ibid. cap. cxxvii.*

<sup>1</sup> *Unto the mountain.*] The mountain S. Giuliano between Pisa and Lucca.

After short course the father and the sons  
Seem'd tired and lagging, and methought I saw  
The sharp tusks gore their sides. When I  
awoke,

Before the dawn, amid their sleep I heard  
My sons (for they were with me) weep and ask  
For bread. Right cruel art thou, if no pang  
Thou feel at thinking what my heart foretold ;  
And if not now, why use thy tears to flow ?  
Now had they waken'd ; and the hour drew  
near

When they were wont to bring us food ; the  
mind

Of each misgave him through his dream, and I  
Heard, at its outlet underneath lock'd up  
The horrible tower : whence, uttering not a  
word

I look'd upon the visage of my sons.

I wept not : so all stone I felt within.

They wept : and one, my little Anselm, cried,  
'Thou lookest so ! Father, what ails thee ? '

Yet

I shed no tear, nor answer'd all that day  
Nor the next night, until another sun  
Came out upon the world. When a faint beam  
Had to our doleful prison made its way,  
And in four countenances I described  
The image of my own, on either hand

Through agony I bit ; and they, who thought  
I did it through desire of feeding, rose  
O' the sudden, and cried, ' Father, we should  
grieve

' Far less, if thou wouldest eat of us : thou  
gavest

' These weeds of miserable flesh we wear ;  
' And do thou strip them off from us again.'  
Then, not to make them sadder, I kept down  
My spirit in stillness. That day and the next  
We all were silent. Ah, obdurate earth !  
Why open'dst not upon us ? When we came  
To the fourth day, then Gaddo at my feet  
Ourstretch'd did fling him, crying, ' Hast no  
help

' For me, my father ! ' There he died ; and  
e'en

Plainly as thou seest me, saw I the three  
Fall one by one 'twixt the fifth day and sixth :  
Whence I betook me, now grown blind, to  
grope

Over them all, and for three days aloud  
Call'd on them who were dead. Then, fasting  
got

The mastery of grief." Thus having spoke,  
Once more upon the wretched skull his teeth  
He fasten'd like a mastiff's 'gainst the bone,  
Firm and unyielding. Oh, thou Pisa ! shame

Of all the people, who their dwelling make  
 In that fair region, where the Italian voice  
 Is heard ; since that thy neighbours are so slack  
 To punish, from their deep foundations rise  
 Capraia and Gorgona,<sup>1</sup> and dam up  
 The mouth of Arno ; that each soul in thee  
 May perish in the waters. What if fame  
 Reported that thy castles were betray'd  
 By Ugolino, yet no right hadst thou  
 To stretch his children on the rack. For them,  
 Brigata, Uguccione, and the pair  
 Of gentle ones, of whom my song hath told,  
 Their tender years, thou modern Thebes, did  
 make

Uncapable of guilt. Onward we pass'd,  
 Where others, skarf'd in rugged folds of ice,  
 Not on their feet were turn'd, but each reversed.

There, very weeping suffers not to weep ;  
 For, at their eyes, grief, seeing passage, finds  
 Impediment, and rolling inward turns  
 For increase of sharp anguish : the first tears  
 Hang cluster'd, and like crystal vizors show,  
 Under the socket brimming all the cup.

Now though the cold had from my face dis-  
 lodged  
 Each feeling as 't were callous, yet me seem'd

---

<sup>1</sup> *Capraia and Gorgona.*] Small islands near the mouth  
 of the Arno.

Some breath of wind I felt. “ Whence cometh  
this,”

Said I, “ my Master ? Is not here below  
All vapour quench’d ? ” “ Thou shalt be  
speedily,”

He answer’d, “ where thine eyes shall tell thee  
whence,

The cause descrying of this airy shower.”

Then cried out one, in the chill crust who  
mourn’d :

“ O souls ! so cruel, that the farthest post  
Hath been assign’d you, from this face remove  
The harden’d veil ; that I may vent the grief  
Impregnate at my heart, some little space,  
Ere it congeal again.” I thus replied :

“ Say who thou wast, if thou wouldst have  
mine aid ;

And if I extricate thee not, far down  
As to the lowest ice may I descend.”

“ The friar Alberigo,” <sup>1</sup> answer’d he,  
“ Am I, who from the evil garden pluck’d

<sup>1</sup> *The friar Alberigo.*] Alberigo de’ Manfredi of Faenza, one of the Frati Godenti, Joyous Friars, who, having quarrelled with some of his brotherhood, under pretence of wishing to be reconciled, invited them to a banquet, at the conclusion of which he called for the fruit, a signal for the assassins to rush in and dispatch those whom he had marked for destruction. Hence, adds Landino, it is said proverbially of one who has been stabbed, that he has had some of the friar Alberigo’s fruit.

Its fruitage, and am here repaid, the date  
More luscious for my fig."—"Hah!" I ex-  
claim'd,

"Art thou too dead?"—"How in the world  
aloft

It fareth with my body," answer'd he,  
"I am right ignorant. Such privilege  
Hath Ptolomea,<sup>1</sup> that oft-times the soul  
Drops hither, ere by Atropos divorced.

And that thou mayst wipe out more willingly  
The glazed tear-drops that o'erlay mine eyes,  
Know that the soul, that moment she betrays,  
As I did, yields her body to a fiend  
Who after moves and governs it at will,  
Till all its time be rounded: headlong she  
Falls to this cistern. And perchance above  
Doth yet appear the body of a ghost,  
Who here behind me winters. Him thou  
know'st,

If thou but newly art arrived below.

The years are many that have past away,  
Since to this fastness Branca Doria <sup>2</sup> came."

<sup>1</sup> *Ptolomea.*] This circle is named Ptolomea from Ptolemy the son of Abibus, by whom Simon and his sons were murdered, at a great banquet he had made for them. See *1 Maccabees*, ch. xvi. Or from Ptolemy, king of Egypt, the betrayer of Pompey the Great.

<sup>2</sup> *Branca Doria.*] The family of Doria was possessed of great influence in Genoa. Branca is said to have murdered his father-in-law, Michel Zanche, introduced in Canto xxii.

"Now," answer'd I, "methinks thou mockest me;

For Branca Doria never yet hath died,  
But doth all natural functions of a man,  
Eats, drinks, and sleeps, and putteth raiment  
on."

He thus: "Not yet unto that upper foss  
By th' evil talons guarded, where the pitch  
Tenacious boils, had Michel Zanche reach'd,  
When this one left a demon in his stead  
In his own body, and of one his kin,  
Who with him treachery wrought. But now  
put forth

Thy hand, and ope mine eyes." I oped them  
not.

Ill manners were best courtesy to him.

Ah Genoese ! men perverse in every way,  
With every foulness stain'd, why from the  
earth

Are ye not cancel'd ? Such an one of yours  
I with Romagna's darkest spirit <sup>1</sup> found  
As, for his doings, even now in soul  
Is in Cocytus plunged, and yet doth seem  
In body still alive upon the earth.

<sup>1</sup> *Romagna's darkest spirit.*] The friar Alberigo.

## CANTO XXXIV

## Argument.

In the fourth and last round of the ninth circle, those who have betrayed their benefactors are wholly covered with ice. And in the midst is Lucifer, at whose back Dante and Virgil ascend, till by a secret path they reach the surface of the other hemisphere of the earth, and once more obtain sight of the stars.

“ THE banners of Hell’s Monarch do come forth

Toward us ; therefore look,” so spake my guide,

“ If thou discern him.” As, when breathes a cloud

Heavy and dense, or when the shades of night Fall on our hemisphere, seems view’d from far A windmill, which the blast stirs briskly round ; Such was the fabric then methought I saw.

To shield me from the wind, forthwith I drew

Behind my guide : no covert else was there.

Now came I (and with fear I bid my strain Record the marvel) where the souls were all Whelm’d underneath, transparent, as through glass

Pellucid the frail stem. Some prone were laid ;

Others stood upright, this upon the soles,  
That on his head, a third with face to feet  
Arch'd like a bow. When to the point we  
came,

Whereat my guide was pleased that I should  
see

The creature eminent in beauty once,  
He from before me stepp'd and made me pause.

"Lo!" he exclaim'd, "lo Dis; and lo the  
place,

Where thou hast need to arm thy heart with  
strength."

How frozen and how faint I then became,  
Ask me not, reader! for I write it not;  
Since words would fail to tell thee of my state.  
I was not dead nor living. Think thyself,  
If quick conception work in thee at all,  
How I did feel. That emperor, who sways  
The realm of sorrow, at mid breast from the ice  
Stood forth; and I in stature am more like  
A giant, than the giants are his arms.

Mark now how great that whole must be, which  
suits

With such a part. If he were beautiful  
As he is hideous now, and yet did dare  
To scowl upon his Maker, well from him  
May all our misery flow. Oh what a sight!  
How passing strange it seem'd, when I did spy

Upon his head three faces : one in front  
Of hue vermillion, the other two with this  
Midway each shoulder join'd and at the crest ;  
The right 'twixt wan and yellow seem'd ; the  
left

To look on, such as come from whence old Nile  
Stoops to the lowlands. Under each shot forth  
Two mighty wings, enormous as became  
A bird so vast. Sails never such I saw  
Outstretch'd on the wide sea. No plumes had  
they,

But were in texture like a bat, and these  
He flapped i' th' air, that from him issued still  
Three winds, wherewith Cocytus to its depth  
Was frozen. At six eyes he wept : the tears  
Adown three chins distill'd with bloody foam.  
At every mouth his teeth a sinner champ'd,  
Bruised as with ponderous engine ; so that  
three

Were in this guise tormented. But far more  
Than from that gnawing, was the foremost  
pang'd

By the fierce rending, whence oft-times the back  
Was stript of all its skin. "That upper  
spirit,

Who hath worst punishment," so spake my  
guide,

" Is Judas, he that hath his head within

And plies the feet without. Of th' other two,  
 Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw  
 Who hangs, is Brutus :<sup>1</sup> lo ! how he doth  
 writhe

And speaks not. The other, Cassius, that  
 appears

So large of limb. But night now re-ascends  
 And it is time for parting. All is seen."

I clipp'd him round the neck ; for so he bade :  
 And noting time and place, he, when the wings  
 Enough were oped, caught fast the shaggy  
 sides,

And down from pile to pile descending stepp'd  
 Between the thick fell and the jagged ice.

Soon as he reach'd the point, whereat the  
 thigh

Upon the swelling of the haunches turns,  
 My leader there, with pain and struggling hard,  
 Turn'd round his head where his feet stood  
 before,

And grappled at the fell as one who mounts ;  
 That into hell methought we turn'd again.

<sup>1</sup> *Brutus.*] Landino struggles, but I fear in vain, to extricate Brutus from the unworthy lot which is here assigned him. He maintains, that by Brutus and Cassius are not meant the individuals known by those names, but any who put a lawful monarch to death. Yet if Cæsar was such, the conspirators might be regarded as deserving of their doom.

"Expect that by such stairs as these," thus  
spake

The teacher, panting like a man forespent,  
"We must depart from evil so extreme :"  
Then at a rocky opening issued forth,  
And placed me on the brink to sit, next join'd  
With wary step my side. I raised my eyes,  
Believing that I Lucifer should see  
Where he was lately left, but saw him now  
With legs held upward. Let the grosser sort,  
Who see not what the point was I had past,  
Bethink them if sore toil oppress'd me then.

"Arise," my master cried, "upon thy feet.  
The way is long, and much uncouth the road ;  
And now within one hour and half of noon <sup>1</sup>  
The sun returns." It was no palace-hall  
Lofty and luminous wherein we stood,  
But natural dungeon where ill-footing was  
And scant supply of light. "Ere from the  
abyss

I separate," thus when risen I began :  
"My guide ! vouchsafe few words to set me  
free  
From error's thraldom. Where is now the  
ice ?

<sup>1</sup> *Within one hour and half of noon.*] The Poet uses the Hebrew manner of computing the day, according to which the third hour answers to our twelve o'clock at noon.

How standeth he in posture thus reversed ?  
And how from eve to morn in space so brief  
Hath the sun made his transit ? ” He in few  
Thus answering spake : “ Thou deemest thou  
art still

On the other side the centre, where I grasp’d  
The abhorred worm that boreth through the  
world.

Thou wast on the other side, so long as I  
Descended ; when I turn’d, thou didst o’erpass  
That point, to which from every part is dragged  
All heavy substance. Thou art now arrived  
Under the hemisphere opposed to that,  
Which the great continent doth overspread,  
And underneath whose canopy expired  
The Man, that was born sinless and so lived.  
Thy feet are planted on the smallest sphere,  
Whose other aspect is Judecca. Morn  
Here rises, when there evening sets and he,  
Whose shaggy pile we scaled, yet standeth  
fix’d,

As at the first. On this part he fell down  
From heaven ; and th’ earth, here prominent  
before,

Through fear of him did veil her with the  
sea,

And to our hemisphere retired. Perchance,  
To shun him, was the vacant space left here,

By what of firm land on this side appears,<sup>1</sup>  
That sprang aloof." There is a place beneath,  
From Belzebub as distant, as extends  
The vaulted tomb ; <sup>2</sup> discovered not by sight,  
But by the sound of brooklet, that descends  
This way along the hollow of a rock,  
Which, as it winds with no precipitous course,  
The wave hath eaten. By that hidden way  
My guide and I did enter, to return  
To the fair world : and heedless of repose  
We climb'd, he first, I following his steps,  
Till on our view the beautiful lights of heaven  
Dawn'd through a circular opening in the cave :  
Thence issuing we again beheld the stars

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<sup>1</sup> *By what of firm land on this side appears.]* The mountain of Purgatory.

<sup>2</sup> *The vaulted tomb.]* "La tomba." This word is used to express the whole depth of the infernal region.

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